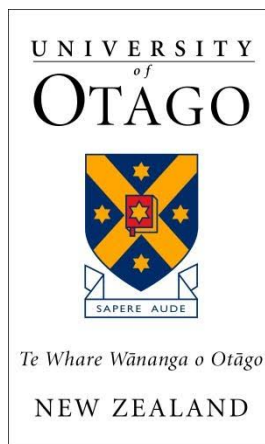


The Development of Planning Processes in Tonga and the Impact of the 2006 Riots



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Abstract

The Kingdom of Tonga is in the southwestern Pacific Ocean and is comprised of four main Island groups: Tongatapu, Ha'apai, Vava'u and the Niuas. Tongatapu contains 74% of Tonga's total population and is home to the Kingdom's capital, Nuku'alofa (Foster and Latukefu, 2019). While the total population of Tonga has declined since the 2011 census, the total population of Tongatapu has increased, with internal migration from the outer Islands also on the rise (Tonga Statistics Department, 2017). In terms of governance, Tonga has been a constitutional monarchy for more than a century. However, pro-democratic movements began in the 1970s and escalated in 2005 with the civil servants' strike. This ultimately led to the riots of November 2006 in which much of the Nuku'alofa Central Business District was destroyed. Academic research has predominantly assessed the 2006 riots in light of the resulting constitutional reform which took place. However, whilst the riots undeniably brought about political change, it also left highly visible effects on Tongatapu's built environment with 80% of the CBD destroyed. Departing from the typical political approach to the events of 2006, this research uses interviews with key government officials and similar international experiences to bring to light the resulting changes that town planning in Tonga experienced when faced with the mass rebuild that ensued. By exploring the 'planning reform' angle, this research will give an overview of how planning has developed in Tonga over time. It will also provide an evaluation of the planning tools which were implemented in response to the riots and their effectiveness as perceived by the government officials in key enforcement agencies and what this means for Tonga going forward.

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"My grace is sufficient for you for my power is made perfect in weakness."

2 Corinthians 12:9

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Introduction

A Background of Tonga

The Kingdom of Tonga is located in the southwestern Pacific Ocean and is comprised of four main island groups: Tongatapu, Ha'apai, Vava'u and the Niuas (Foster and Latukefu, 2019). Figure 1 below shows Tongatapu, its four main island groups and Tonga's location in the wider Pacific Region. Tongatapu contains 74% of Tonga's total population and is home to the Kingdom's capital of Nuku'alofa (Foster and Latukefu, 2019). While the total population of Tonga has declined since the 2011 census, the total population of Tongatapu has increased, with internal migration from the outer Islands also on the rise (Tonga Statistics Department, 2017). In terms of governance, Tonga is a constitutional monarchy and parliamentary democracy, with King George Tupou VI as head of state and newly appointed Prime Minister, the Honourable Dr Pohiva Tu'ionetoa as the head of government (Commonwealth Secretariat, 2019).

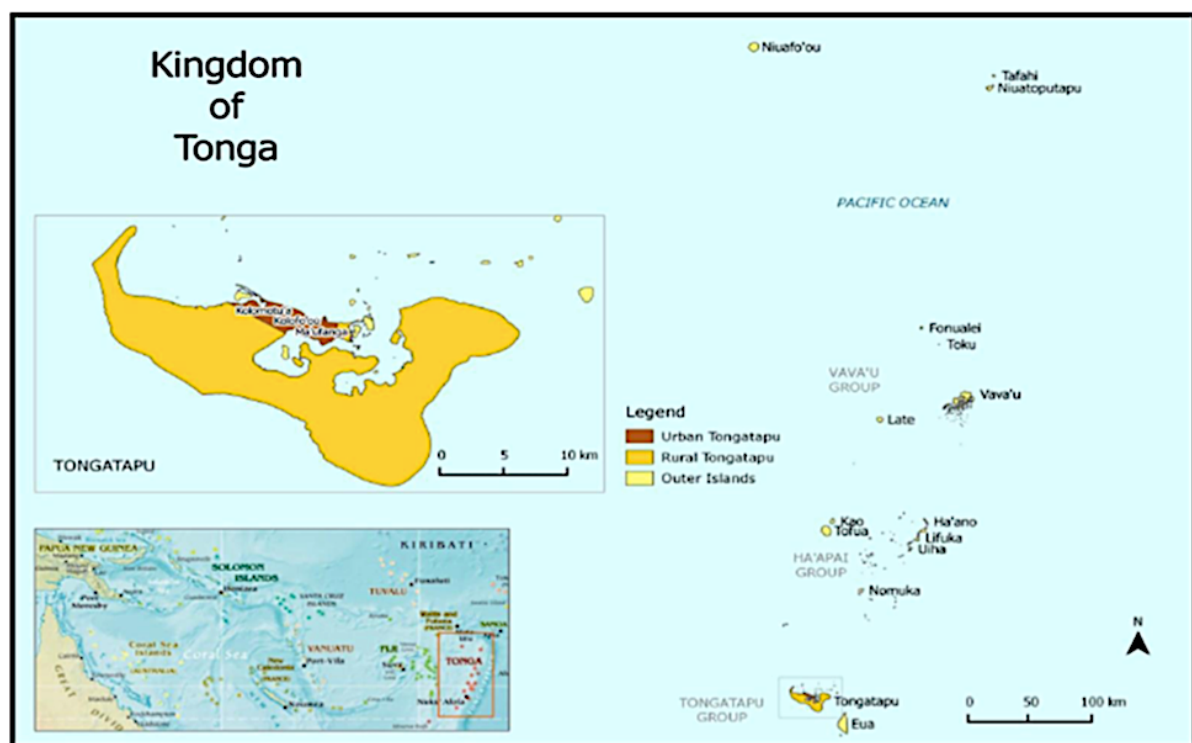


Figure 1: Map of Kingdom of Tonga showing Rural and Urban Areas Sourced from (Tonga Statistics Department, 2017)

The urban area of Nuku'alofa is highlighted in brown in Figure 1. As depicted, Nuku'alofa's urban area includes the villages of Kolofo'ou, Ma'ufanga and Kolomotu'a. It is also home to 23% of Tongatapu's population (Tonga Statistics Department, 2017). A majority of Tonga's economic activity is concentrated in the urban area (Tonga Statistics Department, 2017). For instance, most of the bases for employment, both government and privately owned, as well as shops, produce markets and eateries are all contained in the Nuku'alofa urban area (Tonga Statistics Department, 2017). Therefore, although urban dwellers only constitute a fraction of the total population, the residents of Tongatapu who live outside the urban area travel through to Nuku'alofa daily for employment purposes, groceries and entertainment. This places enormous pressure on Tongatapu's urban infrastructure (Tonga Statistics Department, 2017).

A window to the Past: An Account from Captain Cook

The existing research on Tonga often asserts that before the arrival of the Europeans, Tongans had no order in terms of their spatial placement and organisation (Halatuituia, 2002; Pelesikoti, 2003). However, Captain Cook's account of his visit to Tonga in the 17th century painted a contrasting picture (Bott, 1982). As Cook noted from his journey through Hihifo, the Western District of Tongatapu, the landscape was immaculately maintained and he marvelled at what looked like intricate road networks (Bott, 1982). He wrote that there were large public roads that looked to be about 16 feet wide and which he described to be "*as even as bowling green*" (Cook II (1961): 246). The roads, Cook stated were lined with gardens of crops and the larger public roads branched out into smaller roads leading down to private plantations where families lived (Cook II (1961): 246). The fences along the roads stood at heights not exceeding four inches and was the scene everywhere he looked (Cook II (1961): 246). Cook stated that this scene was one he did not observe in any of the other Pacific Islands he had visited and in his own words: "*I thought I was transported into one of the most fertile plains in Europe.*" (Cook II (1961): 246).

However, while Cook praised the design of the roads and its seemingly deliberate arrangement, Queen Salote Tupou III of Tonga expressed that this would have been coincidental as a tradition of constructing public roads did not previously exist in Tonga

(Bott, 1982). As Queen Salote put it, this would have simply been due to the duty of the land occupants to ensure the paths surrounding their plantations were well-maintained (Bott, 1982). However, this inherently suggests that in fact, Tongans did have a system in place. Though not formally transcribed as rules to follow, there was an understanding that that was how it would be, the underlying principle is the same as that of present-day planning standards and rules which property owners are bound by. While people did not live in villages as they are known today, the Tongan people of old did not simply live without order as frequently implied (Halatuituia, 2002; Pelesikoti, 2003). They lived according to what made sense to them; on their plantations where they received sustenance for their families, under the directive of the chiefs. They also lived spread out across the Island and did not live sequestered in clusters. Though they did not live in villages, they certainly lived sustainably and in ways that amazed the British born James Cook (Cook II (1961): 246). Living in villages then came twenty-five years later during the Tongan (Ulukalala) Civil Wars when the country divided under their respective chiefs and created forts in preparation for battle (Bott, 1982; Halatuituia, 2002).

The Riots

Kele'a, a Tongan based newspaper ended its December 1988 – January 1989 edition with the following statement: *"If the injustices and suffering of the people are not given due attention while there is peace and order, a time shall come when there will be no alternative but a revolution. Not through the will of anyone but by the culmination of a process over time."* (Kele'a, 1989). That time came on the 16th of November 2006 (Benguigui, 2011; Thomas, 2017). The pro-democratic movement which led to it had begun during the 1970s with little effect (Benguigui, 2011). It was driven by a number of different people over the course of time before it reached a critical high in 2005 with the civil servants' strike, and with Tonga's late Prime Minister Akilisi Pohiva at the forefront (Benguigui, 2011). Finally, in 2006, pro-democracy demonstrations escalated to an uprising when the demonstrators discovered that parliament might not accept the democratic and constitutional reforms that they were demanding (Benguigui, 2011). In the end, the Riots accomplished the constitutional reform that had been advanced to parliament and in 2010 with the formalising of the reform, it removed the Monarch's privilege to appoint the Prime Minister and Ministers of Cabinet (Benguigui, 2011; Jones, 2016; The

Commonwealth, 2019). Under the constitutional reform, seats within the unicameral Legislative Assembly shifted from a majority designated for hereditary nobles to a majority of seats designated for parliamentary members chosen during general elections (The Commonwealth, 2019). This reform saw 17 of the 26 seats set aside for elected members and nine seats designated for the Kingdom's hereditary nobles, of which they elected amongst themselves (The Commonwealth, 2019).

Whilst the Riots accomplished a more inclusive approach to national governance, it had horrific implications for the Nuku'alofa Central Business District (The Economist, 2006; Benguigui, 2011). This came in the form of \$106 million in damages as 80% of the CBD lay in ashes (The Economist, 2006). Images from destroyed parts of the CBD at that time are provided in Figures 2 and 3. It was this experience that highlighted the need for a body to coordinate the reconstruction of Nuku'alofa and thus brought planning to the fore.



Figure 2: The Nuku'alofa CBD in ruins 1. Picture sourced from (Radio New Zealand, 2018)



Figure 3: The Nuku'alofa CBD in ruins 2. Picture sourced from (libcom.org, 2006)

Rationale for Research

The 2006 Riots are predominantly associated with the subsequent constitutional reform and the controversial China loan which funded the reconstruction. Though it physically desecrated the urban fabric of Nuku'alofa, research seldom examines the Event in terms of the technical processes which returned the urban area to a liveable state and even less so, the central role that planning played in that rehabilitation. This research seeks to investigate the Riots from this angle, which has often been overshadowed by the wide ranging implications of the political reform. It will evaluate the Riots in its role as a catalyst for planning in Tonga and in doing so, will fill the gap in the current body of knowledge.

Before the introduction of planning after the Riots, published government reports often highlighted the lack of planning legislation and skilled staff in this area (National Spatial Planning Authority Office and the Asian Development Bank, 2015). It is reported that urban infrastructure scarcely able to withstand the use of the current urban population along with the influx of residents outside of the urban area throughout all seven days of the week (National Spatial Planning Authority Office and the Asian Development Bank, 2015). If the rising trend of internal migration is to continue as projected in the 2016 census, the need for capable personnel and a complete overhaul of the existing urban amenities is urgent (Tonga Statistics Department, 2017).

While the Riots are chosen as the focal independent variable of this study, the research also seeks to highlight the development of planning in the Tongan context and to identify

issues which need alleviating. It will also identify ways in which planning processes can become more effective by exploring lessons from the wider Pacific Region and applying it to Tonga's current situation. From these lessons it will construct a model planning approach that will assist Tonga in its future planning and urban management.

Scope of the Study

Though this study will consider implications and lessons that can be applied to Tonga as a whole, the study itself is mostly restricted to the urban area of Nuku'alofa highlighted in Figure 1. The reason for this is simply because it was the area that was most affected by the 2006 Riots, to which this study is concentrated. It should be noted that there are valuable planning lessons to learn from the outer Islands and the rural areas of Tongatapu, particularly with the motivations and trends of rural to urban migration. However, such a wide scope would require a greater platform than what this research seeks to achieve. If the scope is too wide, it might also detract from the underlying purpose of this research which is to highlight the pivotal role of the Riots with regards to planning and the subsequent development of Planning.

Research Questions and Objectives

As detailed above, there are four key objectives to this research:

- 1) to establish the significance of the 2006 Riots to planning development in Tonga;
- 2) to explore and examine the subsequent progression of planning in Tonga since its establishment after the 2006 Riots to the present day;
- 3) to identify the issues and highlight the successes and key events in the development of planning in Tonga;
- 4) to propose an ideal model for planning in Tonga.

In light of these four key objectives, the following research questions were devised to guide the research in terms of conducting the data collection needed to shape the research narrative.

1. What planning processes existed in Tonga prior to the 2006 Riots?
2. What planning tools or frameworks were developed after or as a result of the 2006 Riots?
3. To what extent do the relevant key enforcement agents perceive that the current tools and frameworks have achieved their purpose and are sufficient to tackle the current and projected urban infrastructure pressures?

The first two questions are factual and will be answered by assessing various planning documents from the two time periods. The final research question is perception based and will be addressed through key informant interviews with key enforcement agents in Tonga. Key enforcement agents refer to government staff members who partake in enforcing planning related tasks.

Research Structure

This thesis will provide an account of the development of planning in Tonga whilst assessing the impact that the Riots had on its development. Following the present chapter, chapter two assesses the relevant literature and contextualises the research by exploring the development of planning in the wider Pacific context. Chapter three then outlines the methodological approach in which data collection was carried out. Following this, an introduction is provided for Chapters Four and Five. These two chapters present the results of the data collection from the key informant interviews and the review of planning documents. Chapter Six then synthesises the literature and the results presented in Chapters Two, Four and Five and provides an interpretation of the research findings. It also explores the implications of the research findings and suggests potential ways forward for planning in Tonga. Chapter Seven then concludes the research by outlining the key findings, recommendations and thoughts on future research.

Literature Review

Introduction

In order to establish a theoretical foundation for this study, the current chapter explores the development of planning in the wider Pacific context. As this research seeks to evaluate the development of planning in Tonga, in order to put it into perspective, it is appropriate to look back at its development in the broader Pacific story. However, because planning as it is practiced today, is not a discipline native to the Pacific, it is necessary to look even further into the past, in order to understand why Pacific planning has developed in the way that it has. This will then provide a holistic view of planning and a deeper understanding of its place in the Tongan context.

In this vein, the current chapter begins with a brief account of the planning field's origins and its subsequent manifestation in the Pacific. It then examines the various challenges and successes of implementing planning process throughout the Pacific. In doing so, it suggests a path forward for Tonga, whose implementation of planning processes is still in its preliminary stages.

It would have been ideal to also provide an overview of how planning was used as a response mechanism to assist in reconstruction efforts following a political uprising that resulted in considerable infrastructure damage. However, though the Pacific has abounded with events of political strife in recent years and despite such events resulting in significant infrastructural damage to urban centres and requiring intensive reconstruction, research has predominantly viewed these events in light of their political ramifications. Despite this limitation, a thorough evaluation of the issues that countries in the Pacific have endured while struggling with mass urbanisation and the use of planning as a response to those issues will be provided. In addition to this, a brief account of how some countries have applied planning processes after the event of a natural disaster will be considered towards the end of this chapter. Though not entirely reflective

of the usual response to a sudden uprising such as the 2006 Riots, the weaving of those experiences will paint a picture of how planning has been used to establish order in Pacific urban centres.

The Origins of Planning

The planning field as it exists today with its green belts, land-use zoning, public squares and street layout characterised by grid-iron form, has its roots in the 'Grand Modell', a 17th century plan for a utopian settlement in what was then called the Province of Carolina (Home, 1997). However, the practice did not become prevalent till the 19th century through the British colonial expansion (Okpala, 1997; Cherry, 1978). During this time, planning principles were primarily employed to manage urbanisation and the rise of informal settlements in the colonies, particularly in the port cities such as Bombai and Singapore (Cherry, 1978). According to Home (1997), the mass and rapid restructuring was largely influenced by public health scares when diseases such as cholera and the bubonic plague were spreading across Europe. As the diseases were predominantly concentrated in the areas inhabited by the indigenous populations, many of the indigenous people were displaced and shifted to areas outside of the urban centres (Home, 1992; Okpala, 1997). Ironically however, because of the scale of the restructuring, instead of isolating the diseases, it had the opposite effect and instead facilitated its further spread (Home, 1992).

In addition to public health reasons, the model was also used to practice exclusionary land-use planning based on race, which was carried out most notably in South Africa and Singapore. Authors such as Home (1992, 1997) and Okpala (1997) discussed that in many instances, the application of the Grand Modell during the colonial era was grossly inhumane and social implications were scarcely considered. As Home (1992, 1997) and Okpala (1997) explained, colonial land policies were methodically designed to prevent indigenous communities from partaking in urban management processes. As such, a great deal of indigenous cultural heritage, values and practices were dismissed and lost in the process (Home, 1997; Hibbard, 2006).

Despite several variations to the Grand Modell over the subsequent centuries, many of the fundamental aspects of the system have survived to this day (Home, 1997). Whilst this paints a rather sombre picture, given its earlier applications, as a field, planning has evolved to represent a holistic approach to managing urban growth and taking into consideration all aspects of society (Juswanto and Kelkar, 2019). This is often under the umbrella of ‘sustainable development’, the notion that all areas of the environment are left better than before (World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED), 1987).

Whilst the narrative above is widely recognised as the origin story of modern planning, it is important to also acknowledge the existence of planning before the era of colonialism (Juswanto and Kelkar, 2019; Stanislawski). Numerous scholars affirm that many ancient civilisations from Ancient Rome to India practiced similar planning principles, albeit driven by different theories (Dutt, 1925; Stanislawski, 1946). In fact, the earliest signs of deliberate ‘town planning’ can be traced back to the 26th century BC City of Mohenjo-Daro in modern day Pakistan (Stanislawski, 1946). Thousands of years before the establishment of grid form streets, Mohenjo-Daro had incorporated this design along with an efficient reticulated sewerage network, specially designated public areas and an overall urban design of impeccable precision, made even more impressive when considering the tools that were available at that time (Stanislawski, 1946; Smith, 2007). Indeed, most cultures practiced some form of planning dependent on their own social constructs, beliefs and essentially, what made sense to them (Juswanto and Kelkar, 2019). Such was the case with many Pacific Island countries before they were first encountered by foreigners (Smith, 2007). The establishment of foreign administrations, their application of planning in the Pacific and its subsequent development up to the current day will now be examined in the following sections.

Planning in the Pacific

This section examines the introduction of planning into the Pacific through the British colonial expansion discussed above. However, whilst the foreign presence in the Pacific was primarily British, it must be noted that other European powers such as the French

also ventured into the Pacific and left a lasting impression on their governance systems (Jones, 2016). In addition to presenting what is effectively the origin story of Planning in the Pacific, this section will then examine its development across the Pacific in terms of the challenges and successes of implementing the traditionally Eurocentric regime.

The Origin of Planning in the Pacific

The Pacific consists of more than 20,000 Islands across the three main ethnographic groups of Micronesia, Melanesia and Polynesia (United Nations, 2018). Many of the Islands in the Pacific first received foreign visitors in the 16th century and during this time, engagement was largely sporadic and exploratory in nature (Jones, 2016). However, exploration turned into exploitation at the turn of the 19th century, largely as a result of the expansion of the British empire (Jones, 2016). During this time, many Pacific Islands came under the rule of foreign administrations as colonists claimed and occupied Pacific land as their own. Levuka in Fiji, Apia in Samoa and Port Moresby in Papua New Guinea (PNG) were all established to serve as trade, commerce and defence centres for their foreign administrations (Jones, 2016; Connell, 2017). The British perspective was that Pacific traditions were a hinderance to advancement and that in applying the standard model of planning which was derived from the Grand Modell, they were imparting a *“civilising influence”* and establishing order (Home, 1997; Jones, 2016). Pivotal to that model, was the idea of establishing a single town or place as the centre of the colony where all trade, commerce and government would be concentrated, this has been termed ‘deliberate urbanisation’ by many authors (Crocombe, 1987; Home, 1997; Jones, 2016). As such, the current planning regimes and the physical layout of many existing Pacific ports, towns and urban centres were built on the ambitions of distant and foreign societies as opposed to the needs of the indigenous peoples (Hibbard and Lane and Rasmussen, 2008; Jones, 2016). For instance, land laws in PNG were heavily influenced by Australian Law, which itself was built on the British system (Crocombe 1987; Jones 2016). The Tahitian system was put in place by the French and the governing land laws for the Cook Islands were derived from New Zealand, which itself was put in place by its British colonists (Crocombe, 1987; Jones 2016).

It is in such a manner that the systematic approach to managing urban growth and planning settlements developed and spread throughout the Pacific. However, the notion of sustainable development is intrinsic to most Pacific cultures and has always been present (Jones and Lea, 2006). Though a structured approach to planning their settlements may have been absent, Pacific peoples have always had special and often spiritual ties to their land and natural resources which inherently led to its preservation for generations to come (Bryant-Tokelau, 1997). This sense of stewardship is often tied to stories of creation and the divine world (Halatuituia, 2002). In Tonga, the narrative of land being fished out from the ocean or having been bestowed through divine intervention when Tonga was first created had been passed down for generations (Halatuituia, 2010). Māori, the indigenous people of New Zealand are known for their particularly strong spiritual ties to the land through their version of the creation story and are referred to as the *tangata whenua*, literally translated to ‘people of the land’ (Challenger, 1994). Taule’alo, Fong and Setefano (2002) at the National Environment Forum in 2002 in Apia Samoa also stated that “*Land is at the very core of everything connected to the fa’a-Samoa [Samoan way of life] – culture, titles, language, aiga [family] and people.*” Evidently, Pacific people have tended to the land and the realm of nature with reverence long before the influence of Western ideals, Christianity and the notion of ‘sustainable development’ made popular through the 1987 UN Brundtland Report (Pelesikoti, 2003).

Post-Colonial era Planning in the Pacific – The issue of Land

Years later after gaining independence, many Pacific Island countries continued to operate within the urban management systems that were put in place by their previous foreign administrations (Jones, 2016; Connell, 2017). However, though Pacific cultures have changed and evolved with time, the cultural narratives and values of old still influence their world views today (Bryant-Tokelau, 1997; Pelesikoti, 2003; Halatuituia, 2002). As such, while adjustments have been made over time in attempts to better adapt the foreign based governance and planning processes to the relevant cultures, many incongruences still exist (Jones and Lea, 2007; Jones, 2018). The foreign based land tenure systems in Pacific Island countries, still fail to effectively regulate urban management and the provision of public services, due to the introduced land tenure

systems not aligning with the deep-rooted connection that Pacific peoples have with their land, thus presenting a challenge to practicing planning in the Pacific (Jones, 2016).

For instance, part of the attempts to implement planning and urban management measures in the Pacific have involved amending or implementing legislation to allow the compulsory acquisition of land for public purposes (Jones, 2016). However, Papua New Guinea reported that though they had the legal right, it was still difficult to carry out certain public amenity projects as people adamantly refused to separate from their lands (Jones, 2016; Connell, 2017). This was largely due to sentimental attachments as land had been held by the same families for generations (Bryant-Tokelau, 1996; Jones, 2016). With such a high intrinsic value associated with land, the financial cost for compensation if land were to be acquired, also reflected that (Connell, 2017). The PNG Urban Planning Unit reported that with very few resources, it was difficult to meet those land compensation costs and as a result, such provisions in their land legislation remained silent even years after their enactment (Jones, 2016). The experiences of PNG, are not a rarity and many Pacific Island Countries face similar issues (Jones, 2016; Jones and Lea, 2006).

Another issue is the impact of cultural sensitivity around land on political commitment towards planning and urban management (Crocombe, 1987). As with any national issue, if it is not prioritised by the government in power, it faces little chance of being realised or progressing any further (Connell, 2017). Pacific politicians know all too well, the sensitivity surrounding land issues and according to Jones (2016), deliberately avoid focusing on any issue which requires delving into the realm of land ownership or land acquisition. As land is a fundamental element of planning and urban management, with inadequate support from those in power to move the agenda forward, such fields have remained stagnant across the Pacific (Bryant-Tokelau, 1997). Unfortunately, and perhaps unknowingly for many Pacific nations, this has caused and allowed certain issues to exacerbate as planning is much more than just a field which deals with the spatial arrangement of human settlements (Jones, 2016). In fact, for that function alone, authors such as Okpala (1997) and Home (1997) expressed that planning has the power to influence environmental health, human health, climate resilience and numerous other areas central to community and individual wellbeing. However, the stance taken by many Pacific countries has been to view certain issues in isolation while failing to see that more

often than not, most issues are interlinked (Low, 1981; Kuruppu, 2016). With the ever increasing rates of urbanisation, many Pacific nations face a plethora of issues which can be reduced through planning. Urbanisation and its associated issues in the Pacific Region are explored in the following sections (Kuruppu, 2016).

Urbanisation in the Pacific and the Role of Planning

Urbanisation is defined as the *“process by which people move from rural areas to towns and cities, causing social, economic, and environmental consequences”* (Jones, 2012). As established at the beginning of this chapter, at its core, the planning field is a response to urbanisation. This continues to be the case today thus, in this vein,, the current section will give a brief account of urbanisation and its rise in the Pacific (Connell, 2017).

In the mid 1990s, it was confirmed that the Pacific (excluding Australia and New Zealand) was home to some of the most rapidly growing urban areas in the world (United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), 1996). Interestingly, this was scarcely acknowledged on the global stage and in mainstream media (UNDP, 1996). The tendency to overlook the urban growth in the Pacific may have been due to Pacific countries having relatively smaller populations in comparison to countries such as India or China (Meriotte, 2019; Asian Development Bank, 2018). By 2009, it was declared that for the first time in the history of the world, more people lived in urban areas than rural area. In 2016, Pacific countries (excluding Australia and New Zealand) were experiencing urbanisation rates over three times the global average and future projections only expect this trend to continue rising (Kuruppu, 2016; United Nations, 2018). In their publication on world urbanisation prospects, the United Nations advise that it is now more important than ever that the effective management of urban growth is taken seriously, particularly in low-income countries, where urbanisation pressures are expected to be most severe (United Nations, 2018).

The causes of Urbanisation

Much of the research on urbanisation has identified globalisation as a key determinant in the increasing levels of rural to urban migration (Kurrupu, 2019). As the world became more connected and with information more widespread and accessible, a picture of prosperity and convenience became associated with urban living (Kurrupu, 2019; Jones, 2016). The popularity of the urban lifestyle increased and in many previous colonies, urbanisation had already been enforced by their foreign administrators who established single towns as centres for trade, commerce and government (Home, 1997). As a result, Pacific people gravitated towards the urban centres chasing the promise of a better life, or more so, the life that had become more desirable over the traditional way of life (Bryant-Tokelau, 1997; Connell, 2017).

In 2016, high levels of urbanisation were reported in Port Vila, Vanuatu (Thomas, 2017; Jones, 2016). It was reported that rural to urban migration was due to urban area pull factors such as job availability, tertiary education and better health facilities (Connell, 2017; Kurrupu, 2019). The perception that cities or the urban area has more of both quantity and quality has driven people out and into the already overcrowded city centres (Leslie, 2013; Connell, 2017; Jones and Lea, 2006). Connell (2017) stated that prolonged unrestrained urban growth in the Pacific has put undue pressure on the public infrastructure and increased the costs associated with both renovating and expanding the scope of the infrastructure.

Melanesia is the source of the majority of urban growth in the Pacific (Jones, 2016; Kurrupu, 2019). Figure 4 below portrays the urban growth experienced by several Pacific Island countries in 2012 and as depicted, much of the urban growth in the Pacific has been concentrated in Melanesian countries such as Solomon Islands, Vanuatu and Fiji who experienced urban growth rates significantly higher than their national population growth rates (Kurrupu, 2019; Jones, 2012).

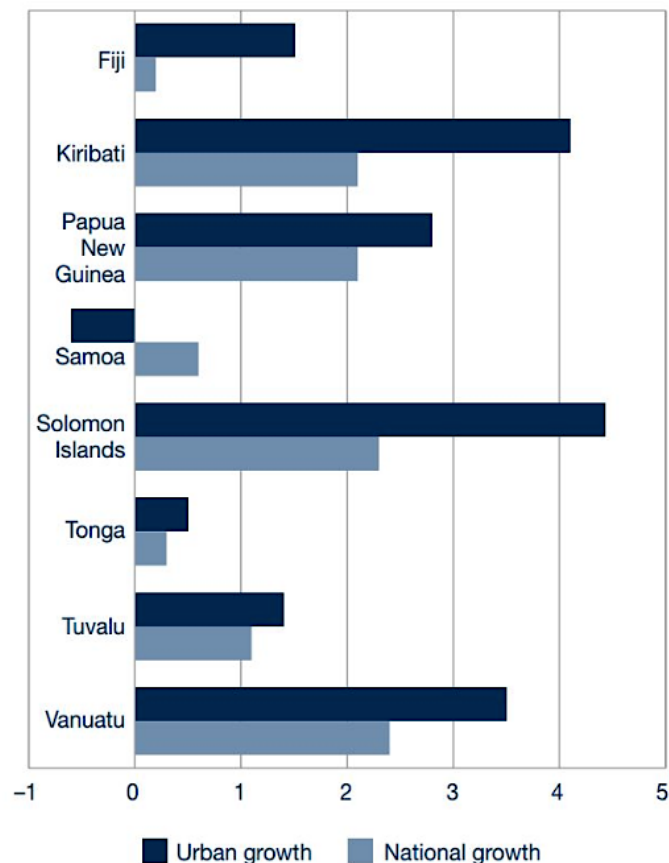


Figure 4: Urban population growth vs Nation Growth in the Pacific Sourced from (Jones, 2012; The Pacific Community (SPC), 2012; United Nations Population Fund, 2014).

With the soaring skyscrapers and thriving metropolises of the developed world, the vision that previous foreign administrations held of a thriving urban centre has been achieved at a colossal scale (Okpala, 1997; Jones, 2016). However, for developing countries such as those in the Pacific who lack a robust and systematic approach to planning for and controlling urbanisation, urban centres have become breeding grounds for a vast number of issues (Bryant-Tokelau; 1997, Jones and Lea, 2006). These issues will now be examined in the following section.

The challenges of Urbanisation

The burgeoning urban population across the Pacific has produced a number of challenges that Pacific planning practitioners continue to grapple with (Jones, 2016). These challenges are presented in Figure 5 below, however, this is not assumed to be an exhaustive list. In 1996, Jones (1996) stated that one of the most crucial concerns of the

21st century for Pacific countries would be the development of effective urban management practices to combat the impacts of urbanisation. Over two decades later, Jones (1996) projection has proven to be true, as Pacific planning practitioners struggle to develop a system to safeguard against and alleviate the issues displayed below. As deliberated by numerous Pacific researchers, chief among the issues are the rise of informal settlements and the impacts that urbanisation has had on the health of Pacific urban residents (Connell, 2017). These two issues will be examined in detail below.



Figure 5: Negative Impacts of Urbanisation on Pacific Island Countries.

Informal Settlements

Planning practitioners across the Pacific face the dilemma of informal settlements emerging within urban areas and around its peripheries (Connell, 2017). The main issue identified by Pacific planning practitioners is that the land available in urban areas has not been able to maintain the intensification of rural to urban migration (Connell, 2017; Jones, 2016).

Informal settlements are defined as settlements where the occupants do not possess the legal right to occupy a parcel or area of land and thus, are often characterised by living

arrangements which do not conform with planning regulations (Bryant-Tokelau, 1997). Many urban migrants from either the outer islands or rural areas on the main island are unable to afford or find formal living arrangements in urban areas (Bryant-Tokelau, 1997; Jones, 2016). As a result, they then proceed to occupy undocumented areas which are not connected to public services such as sewerage systems, electricity and water supplies (Jones, 2016). Some Pacific Island countries such as Fiji and the Solomon Islands face this issue more than others such as Tonga and Samoa who have relatively low levels of informal settlements (Asian Development Bank, 2018).

While many Pacific planning practitioners experience the challenge of managing informal settlements, the challenges are not only due to high levels of rural to urban migration (Foukona and Allen, 2016). For instance, informal settlements in Tonga and Fiji are a direct result of urbanisation, characterised by people from rural areas and outer islands moving into the urban areas and occupying coastal peripheries within the urban area which were not intended for residential use (Foukona and Allen, 2016). This is not the case for the Solomon Islands. Foukona and Allen (2016) explained that the informal settlement situation in the Solomon Islands is largely due to landowners simply refusing to register their land for fear of the government seizing and using it in ways that do not reflect their cultural values. Land owners stated that their deep-rooted fear of appropriation stemmed from the actions of their former colonial administrations (Jones, 2016). This has led to a deep-seated mistrust of their current foreign based systems and frameworks (Jones, 2016; Connell, 2017). Coupled with a lack of transparency from their Government, many informal settlers fail to identify with their own governing systems and state that any system that has a chance to truly be inclusive would have to be 'home grown' (Foukona and Allen, 2016). As such, the Solomon Islands' Ministry of Lands, Housing and Survey has made attempts to develop a more culturally sensitive urban management system with the involvement of both community members and technical experts (Keen and Carpenter, 2017).

The case of the Solomon Islands serves as a reminder that at times, what constitutes as a culturally appropriate way of living for Pacific countries, does not fit the mould of modern planning concepts which are largely of a Eurocentric nature (Keen and Carpenter, 2017). In this regard, traditional settlements do not fit into the framework of planning today and

are thus deemed 'informal' (Keen and Carpenter, 2017). Fiji was one of the first Pacific Island countries that attempted to devise an alternate planning system which encompassed the 'Pacific Way' (Phillips and Keen, 2016). These attempts included recognising the rights of informal settlers and expanding the delivery scope of public services to include informal settlements (Keen and Carpenter, 2017). Fiji referred to this as a 'policy bridge' between formal and informal settlements (Keen and Carpenter, 2017).

Impacts on Human Health

Urban living throughout the Pacific is also characterised by unhealthy lifestyles with elevated levels of both non-communicable diseases and infectious diseases (Foukona and Allen, 2016; Keen and Carpenter, 2017). The process of urbanisation has caused many Pacific countries to lose their traditionally physically active lifestyles of subsistence fishing and agriculture. The physical layout of urban centres such as that of Papua New Guinea also contributes to the degrading health issue where the urban centre is designed in a way which favours the automobile and discourages active transport modes such as walking and cycling (Foukona and Allen, 2016; Keen and Carpenter, 2017). As such, the sedentary lifestyle and increasingly popular culture of fast food, which are linked to urban living, have led to the rise of obesity and non-communicable diseases such as diabetes, cardiovascular diseases and cancer (Keen and Carpenter, 2017).

In addition to dense settlements which are common to all urban centres, Pacific urban centres are also characterised by dilapidated infrastructure, unsanitary living conditions and overcrowded households (Keen and Carpenter, 2017; Jones, 2018). These factors have facilitated increasing incidences of infectious diseases such as malaria, diarrhoea, tuberculosis, Zika virus and even HIV/AIDS (Keen and Carpenter, 2017; Foukona and Allen, 2016). In light of the common experience shared by most Pacific Island countries in this area, an account of the Marshall Islands' struggle with urbanisation and health issues is presented below (Keen and Carpenter, 2017).

In 2017, the Marshall Islands reported that 13% of their children were obese by the age of 13 and that 37% of children between two to four years old were already categorised as overweight (Thomas and Keen, 2017). On the global scale, the Marshall Islands has

been known to possess one of the highest rates of type 2 diabetes (Thomas and Keen, 2017). Time has done little to change this reality as in 2017, 50% of the population over the age of 35 were already living with the disease, with many of them diagnosed in their earlier years before turning 35 (Thomas and Keen, 2017). Thomas and Keen (2017) also stated that the prevalence of infectious diseases in the Marshall Islands as a result of urbanisation were paralleled only by the densely populated cities of Asia.

Summary

It is clear that Pacific planning practitioners operate within complex systems and face innumerable problems to varying degrees with no obvious solutions. For years, Pacific planning practitioners have attempted to devise effective urban management systems, however, many of these systems are still in their infancy. Over the last few decades, each Pacific Island country has attempted to adapt the planning system to cater to their own distinct cultural values and to implement such processes in a way that is inclusive of all members and facets of society. However, efforts to implement planning processes have been met with resistance at both the governance and grassroots level (Jones, 1996; Storey, 1998). These challenges are discussed in the following section.

Challenges to implementing Planning Processes in the Pacific

As explained above, this section will examine the challenges associated with implementing planning processes in the Pacific scene. Though there are various challenges, this section will only look at the key challenges common across most Pacific Island countries. Planning in the Pacific context is often coloured by a general lack of resources, an institutionally fragmented approach to implementation and a lack of political support as displayed in Figure 6. These three challenges will be examined individually in the following sub-sections, however, this is not to assume that these challenges exist in isolation. The following challenges are often by-products of each other and exist in synergy.

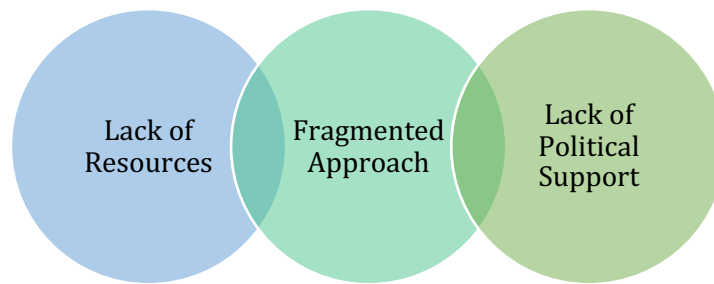


Figure 6: Key challenges to implementing planning processes in Pacific Island countries

Lack of Resources

One of the key challenges that planning practitioners face when attempting to implement planning processes is the general lack of resources (Thomas and Keen, 2017). Resources in this sense represents all resources from financial resources to human resources, as well as material resources (Jones, 1996; Storey, 1998). Despite being rich in natural resources, Pacific countries possess a very limited pool of the resources referred to above. Material shortages are evident from planners' offices at the outset (Jones, 1996; Storey, 1998). It is difficult to work effectively in ill-equipped offices lacking basics such as furniture, a reliable supply of water and electricity (Jones, 1996; Storey, 1998; Thomas and Keen, 2017). Additionally, with scarce funds the appropriate infrastructure cannot be built and existing infrastructure cannot be maintained (Jones, 1996; Storey, 1998; Thomas and Keen, 2017). Many Pacific countries also lack the human capacity to push their agendas with very few qualified planning practitioners. Storey (2006), stated that this general lack of resources has resulted in a prolonged *"policy paralysis"* on urbanisation issues and a lack of awareness amongst the masses. The result of which is reflected in the following expression once used by Pacific planning practitioners to describe planning in the Pacific:

"Everybody's but nobody's business." (Jones and Kohlhase 2002: 27)

As the quote above attempts to portray, in many cases across the Pacific, planning is characterised by a lack of interest in urban reform and general urban management (Jones, 2007; Jones and Lea, 2007; Storey, 2006; United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific and UN-Habitat, 2009). It is often asserted that the

reason for this is because of the general lack of resources available to advance planning to a level where it is recognised on the local, regional and national arena (Jones, 2016; Mecartney, 2014).

Many foreign aid partners have attempted to remedy this by providing both financial assistance as well as assistance in the form of consultants to help local experts in developing effective urban management systems. However, (Jones, 2016) and (Bryant-Tokelau, 1996) stated that in the past, such assistance was ineffective as many of the foreign aid partners compartmentalised issues instead of viewing issues such as road infrastructure and water services as part of a whole and intricate system to be addressed at a more holistic level. In recent years, this approach has evolved and foreign aid partners such as the Asian Development Bank and New Zealand and Australian foreign aid now provide related assistance under the single umbrella of urban management and have attempted to assist Pacific countries in seeing it this way also (Jones, 2016; Mecartney, 2014).. However, progress has been slow and Pacific Island countries have found it difficult to move away from their individualised approach to urban management (Jones, 2016; Mecartney, 2014).. This challenge is addressed in the following sub-section.

A Fragmented Approach to Planning

The approach to planning in the Pacific often consists of a web of different ministries, departments and agencies (Jones, 2016; Connell, 2017), The effort to establish planning process is rarely concentrated within a single entity and this approach has been identified as one of the key challenges to implementing planning processes in Pacific Island countries (Jones, 2016). As established in the previous sub-section, planning covers a number of areas that are often seen as unrelated, with this view in mind and a number of different agencies with the mandate to manage those services, planning duties are often delegated across those different ministries (Connell, 2017). This uncoordinated approach to urban management has rarely yielded positive results as ministries fail to see eye to eye in many instances, resulting in very slow and often stagnant development in planning processes (Jones, 2016; ADB, 2018).

The first attempt to establishing an integrated and systems approach to planning and urban management was carried out by Samoa in the early 2000s (Jones, 2006). Whilst carrying out the typical ad hoc and uncoordinated approach to planning which is characteristic of Pacific Island countries, the Samoan Government realised that they needed to develop an approach to planning which ensured protection against the adverse impacts of urban growth (Jones, 2006; 2016). In formulating this new response, Samoa knew that they needed to establish a system which combined all the individual aspects of the urban network and viewed it holistically as a single operation in order to be effective (Jones, 2016). The product of these efforts were the establishment of the Planning and Urban Management Agency (PUMA) in 2002 and the passing of their Planning and Urban Management Act in 2004 (Jones, 2006; 2016). In establishing PUMA and their planning process, Samoa utilised a ‘bottom-up’ approach which consisted of extensive public and internal consultation phases rather than the typical ‘top-down’ approach with government driven policies (Jones, 2016). PUMA Samoa’s mandate is summed across three core functions which are displayed in Figure 7 below.

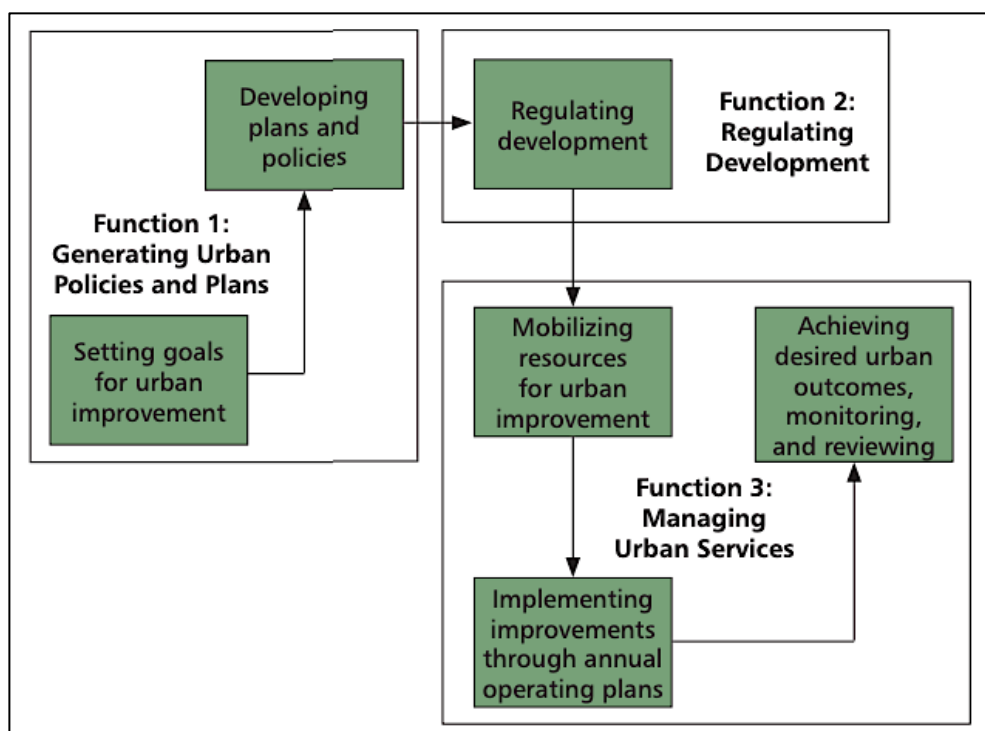


Figure 7: Functions of the Urban Management and Planning System in Samoa.

(Sourced from Government of Samoa and ADB. 2001. An Integrated Urban Planning and Management System for Samoa. Apia.)

The integrated planning approach implemented by Samoa has been hailed as an exemplar for planning best practice in the Pacific (Jones, 2016). Tonga and Papua New Guinea have since followed suit and have made efforts to replicate Samoa's approach to fit their own distinct cultures and situations (Jones, 2016; Connell, 2017). Whilst Samoa is indeed at the forefront of planning in the Pacific, it has not come without its challenges. The Planning and Urban Management Agency (PUMA) of Samoa has explained that they often struggle with raising awareness amongst community and government stakeholders of what they refer to as the risks of the "*do-nothing scenario*" if PUMA were not established to manage development (Jones, 2016; Connell, 2017). After almost two decades, PUMA has also struggled with faltering political support when the country undergoes a political office changeover (Jones, 2016; Connell, 2017). As PUMA explained, this is particularly problematic for their long-term projects that span the lifetime of more than one political office (Jones, 2016). The negative implications of wavering political support are synonymous across the Pacific and are discussed in the following sub-section.

Lack of Political Support

Traditionally, planning has often been one of the lowest priorities of Pacific governments (Connell, 2017). This is largely due to it being a relatively new interest in the Pacific and thus, elected ministers tend to have a minimal understanding of what constitutes planning processes and why it is vital in managing the urban landscape (Connell, 2017; Jones, 2016). As such, planning practitioners and planning agencies, though given mandates to carry out, struggle to make their way on to the national agenda (Jones, 2016; Storey and Hunter, 2010). While many politicians are well aware of the detriments of urbanisation, the issue tends to be that not many of them understand the integral role that planning can play in alleviating those drawbacks (Connell, 2017). Consequently, it is difficult to find national champions prepared to devote time and effort to establishing policies or acquiring resources for the purpose of advancing planning processes (Storey and Hunter, 2010).

Summary

As the Pacific still attempts to make sense of planning as a mechanism for controlling the adverse impacts of urbanisation, Pacific planning practitioners struggle to establish legitimacy within their own national frameworks. This is made even harder as they continue to grapple with wavering political support, resource deficits and fragmented approaches to implementing planning processes. However, planning practitioners in a number of Pacific Island countries have made bold efforts to reconstruct the planning system in a way which considers their distinct cultures with Samoa leading the charge and many other Pacific Island countries attempting to build on Samoa's success.

Disaster Management Planning

As alluded to in the introduction of this chapter, in the absence of sufficient research on planning implementation after a political uprising, this section will briefly consider the role of planning after the event of a natural disaster. Recovery after the event of a natural disaster is driven by the desire to return life to normal (Peek and Mileti, 2002). Recovery is not limited to the built environment, it involves a restoration of the natural environment as well as the social and cultural constructs affected by the disaster event (Peek and Mileti, 2002; Norman, 2006; Smith and Wenger, 2007). As the need is often immediate and severe, stringent planning procedures are often set aside in the event of a natural disaster to allow for the fast-tracking of recovery efforts (Rosenthal and Kouzmin, 1997). Planning services are often delivered via a 'top-down' delegation rather than the preferred 'bottom-up' approach (Rosenthal and Kouzmin, 1997). Authors such as Quarantelli (1986) and Norman (2006) advocate against resorting to that tactic, stating that the centralised approach, though temporary undermines the integrity of the planning process and forgoes the democratic aspect of planning by failing to include community members in the decision making process. However, Fiorino (1990) and Rosenthal and Kouzmin (1997) explained that such an approach is necessary given the nature of natural disasters where depending on the magnitude, the damage is delivered all at once. Thus, a swift decision making process is essential to achieving recovery because as Peek and Mileti (2002) expressed, the standard process which opens dialogue

to all affected communities could take weeks and even years depending on the scale of the recovery needed.

The future of Planning in the Pacific

Upon reflecting on the last few decades of planning development in the Pacific, it imparts several lessons for the implementation of planning processes in the future. As (Mecartney, 2011) put it, it is inherently clear that the future of the Pacific will be shaped by urban lifestyles and urban living arrangements. Thus, the task is now to ensure that Pacific planning practitioners are prepared for the imminent urban growth and its associated impacts. (Jones and Lea, 2016) state that the first step to this is to educate the general public and relevant ministries within the Government, on the proposed planning processes and how they tie in with achieving positive urban outcomes. It is important that everyone understands that they are all key stakeholders and that urban management is not just a problem relevant to a select few (Jones, 2018).

As researchers who have long followed the development of planning processes in the Pacific, Jones (2017) and Connell (2017) stress the importance of having independent agencies such as city councils who are able to carry out their planning responsibilities irrespective of political disturbances within the Government. In saying that, they also acknowledge that it is often difficult in Pacific cultures to grant any government agency complete autonomy, however, they stress that some level of self-sufficiency is required in order for any planning intervention to be impactful. Connell (2017) also warns that for some Pacific communities, the memories of colonisation remain fresh and thus, such communities tend to have a deep-seated mistrust of any overarching authority. Thus, it is important to foster a transparent environment where communities feel comfortable to engage in conversation with government officials (Connell, 2017). Though the road to establishing effective planning processes in Pacific Island countries may seem long and winding, as Peter Oneill, the Prime Minister of Papua New Guinea from 2011 to 2019 put it, *'Government processes are slow when they demand transparency and fairness, but slow should not mean a full stop.'* (Jones, 2016; Connell, 2017). The research in this area has established that though many strictly planned countries are viewed as detached and insensitive, the urban history of developing countries has proven that it is the areas or

the cities that are subject to a methodical planning regime that are most well-off in every aspect of society. As Okpaala (1997) stated:

“In spite of recent various non-governmental groups advocacy approaches in the dialectics of planning and management of cities, the most properly functioning, productive and healthiest parts of developing countries cities today are still those professionally and rationally planned and developed by the public-authority-backed planning system. It is therefore still valid to continue sustained efforts at building and strengthening public institutional capacity, frameworks and structures for planning.”

Conclusion

In providing a history of planning in the Pacific, this chapter contextualises the research and highlights Tonga’s position in the broader Pacific history of planning. In highlighting issues common across the Pacific as well as successes, it provides a way forward for Tonga who is still in its preliminary stages. The rapid growth of urbanisation currently plagues Tonga’s Melanesian neighbours as their urban management agencies and planning practitioners struggle to devise an effective way to manage the myriad of negative impacts such as health issues, environment degradation and widespread poverty. However, there are success stories such as that of Fiji and Samoa who have both found unique solutions to their issues.

Methodology

Introduction

The current chapter will detail the methods used to undertake this study and will discuss why the combination of those methods formed the most appropriate approach to answering the three research questions. The chosen approach was of a qualitative nature and consisted of two key components. The first was the collection of primary data through key informant interviews conducted with relevant key enforcement agents. The second component was then twofold, including an extensive literature review on the existing body of knowledge and an analysis of Tongan Government plans and legislation as well as relevant international reports. The latter component is categorised as secondary data and it was envisioned that in informing the research questions, it would supplement the primary data collected. The chapter is then concluded with a discussion of the ethical considerations and research limitations experienced while carrying out the methods.

Theoretical Framework

As mentioned above, the methodological approach to this study follows a qualitative line of inquiry and assessment. Qualitative approaches are taken when the subject area or the objectives sought for a study cannot be expressed in numerical form. Qualitative methods become appropriate when the research is attempting to measure or address unquantifiable aspects such as the thoughts or feelings of a person after experiencing an event or encounter. As this is precisely in line with what the current study sought to accomplish during the data collection phase, it was clear that a qualitative approach would be the most appropriate choice.

The specific strand of qualitative methodology that was utilised is founded in the theory of interpretivism, concocted by the Chicago School of thought during the early 20th

century (Schwandt, 1998). In devising this way of approaching a qualitative study, the pioneers of interpretivism attempted to guide researchers in understanding the importance of human thought and action over other social constructs. In the words of Schwandt (1998), *“interpretive inquires watch, listen, ask, record and examine.”* As Wolcott (1992) and Erickson (1986) described, researchers practicing interpretivism essentially, interpret the interpretations shared by their participants. In regard to the current study, understanding how Tongan planning practitioners felt about the development of planning processes in Tonga and interpreting why they felt that way would make for a stronger critical analysis of planning development in Tonga and its future direction. For this reason and because the collection of primary data would be key in informing the current study, this is the theoretical framework that was adopted.

Research Design

Following on from the previous section, the theoretical framework also informed the structural design of the research. Noting that the topic for this current study is “The Development of Planning in Tonga following the 2006 Riots”, after an extensive preliminary research period where numerous research articles and government reports were examined, the following research questions were established to guide the data collection:

Research Q1	What planning processes existed in Tonga prior to the 2006 Riots?
Research Q2	What planning tools or frameworks were developed after or as a result of the 2006 Riots?
Research Q3	To what extent do the relevant key enforcement agents perceive that the current tools and frameworks have achieved their purpose and are sufficient to tackle the current and projected urban infrastructure pressures?

Data Collection

This study adopted a qualitative approach and thus, the specific data collection methods are those consistent with a qualitative analysis. In this vein, data was collected in the following forms:

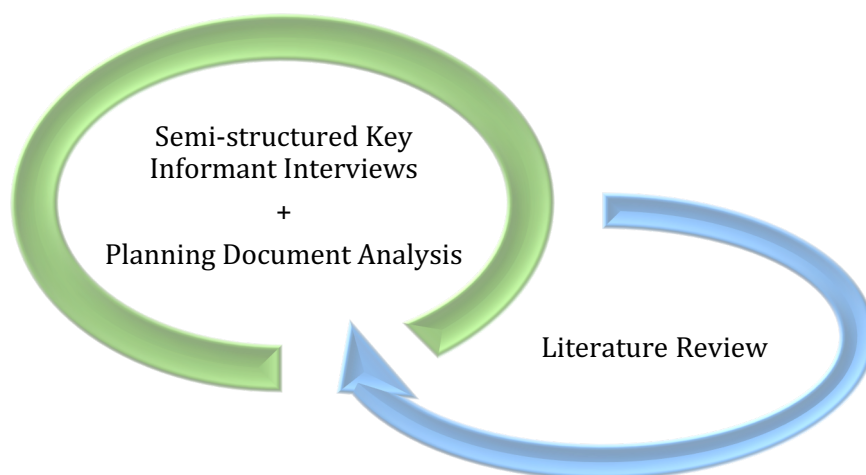


Figure 8: Data Collection Methods

In assessing the scope of the current study and its focus on the perceptions of Tongan planning practitioners, it was decided that the primary data from Key Informant interviews and the analysis of previous and existing planning documents would hold the most value in terms of addressing the three research questions. Thus, it was envisioned that the function of the literature review would be as a supplementing agent rather than a fundamental source of information.

Key Informant Interviews

The primary method of data collection was carried out in the form of semi-structured and open-ended Key Informant interviews. The adoption of a semi-structured approach made both cultural and practical sense. Not only did it provide a form of questioning deemed respectful in Tongan culture, it also allowed the participant a degree of flexibility to steer

the interview towards what they thought was most appropriate. At the same time, it also provided a more in-depth understanding of the participants' views and perceptions (Moore, 2009). Furthermore, according to Moore (2009), in restricting participants to specific areas of discussion, the researcher forgoes the opportunity to discover new angles to their research that might be instrumental in addressing the research goals or questions. As such, open-ended questions were the preferred method of questioning.

Key informants were invited to partake in the research through an interview based on whether they were government officials who worked in planning-related ministries and whether they worked in that space before and after the Riots. Of the fifteen key informants contacted, thirteen agreed to be partake in the research. As portrayed in Table 1 the Key Informants came from a range of related planning ministries. In the interest of maintaining a high level of anonymity, the key informants were all assigned a code to which they will be referred throughout the present study.

Table 1: List of Key Informants

Code	Occupation
K1	Planner
K2	Planner
K3	Environmental Scientist
K4	Foreign Aid Partner Representative
K5	Architect
K6	Surveyor
K7	Environmental Impact Assessment Officer
K8	Environmental Impact Assessment Officer
K9	Staff – Ministry of Lands, Survey and Natural Resources
K10	Staff – Tonga Waste Authority
K11	Planner
K12	Architect
K13	Legal Officer

Analysis of Planning Documents

In addition to the key informant interviews, the analysis of planning documents formed a fundamental part of the basis for the current study. The documents analysed include national plans, national legislation as well as reports produced by foreign aid partners on planning projects carried out in Tonga before and after the Riots. Together with the key informant interviews, the assessment of these documents will produce a clear picture of where and how planning has developed in Tonga and how impactful the Riots were in that development.

Literature Review

An in-depth review of relevant literature was also carried out and is essential in contextualising planning in Tonga by viewing it in the context of the wider Pacific Region. As previously inferred, though it is not the principal data collection method, the stories from the Pacific presented in the literature review are crucial, as by supplementing the primary and other secondary data, the literature closes any gaps in the knowledge base and ensures the delivery of a more robust end product. As depicted in Figure 9, the literature review is structured in a general to specific manner, where firstly, literature pertaining to the origin of the general planning field is assessed, followed by its subsequent establishment in the Pacific and then concluded by considering more specific issues faced by individual Pacific Island countries. This is also in line with authors Gray (2009) and Moore (2006) who stated that no area of research exists in isolation, a thorough research undertaking should always seek out the bigger picture and this is what the literature review for this study sought to provide.

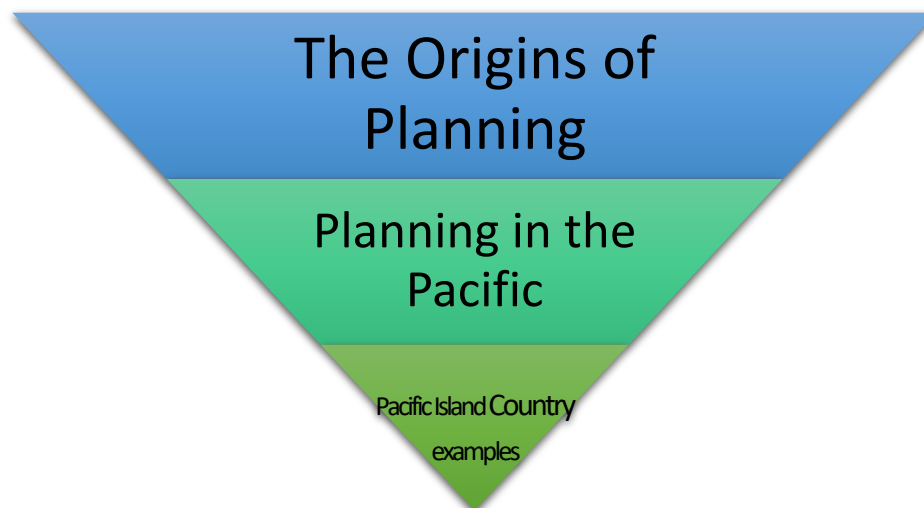


Figure 9: Literature Review Structure

Ethical Considerations and Positionality

With any research involving human participation, it is imperative that ethical implications are considered and that the research is conducted in an ethical manner (Cresswell, 2013). As such, the first step is to consider basic measures that constitute ethical behaviour and the next is to abide by and operate within those ethical boundaries throughout the entirety of the research (Guillemin and Gillam, 2004). In this vein and in line with standard University procedure, a University of Otago Ethics A application form was completed in order to undertake the data collection in Tonga. The form required that the projected methodology and line of questioning for the interviews be specified to ensure it was within the norms of ethical behaviour while in the field. While in Tonga, each key informant was given an information sheet which detailed the key aspects of the research and it was crucial that each key informant was aware that they were allowed to withdraw from the interview at any time if they felt uncomfortable. In all aspects, the research was conducted in a manner that was in line with the University of Otago Code of Conduct as well as the New Zealand Planning Institute Code of Ethics.

In addition to the University Ethics A form, I also had to apply for a Tonga Government Research Permit, a requirement for any research carried out in Tonga. In applying for the Permit, I had to provide details of my research goals and the specific government agencies that I wished to collect data from. The permit process ensures that all research

conducted in Tonga is carried out in such a way that cultural values are not overlooked or mistreated.

In terms of positionality, being a Tongan myself and having grown up most of my life in Tonga, when I travelled to carry out the data collection, I was simply returning home. Though I was familiar with the cultural and physical terrain in Tonga and despite having lived through the Riots myself, I was aware that because I had never worked in the Tongan Government, I was effectively entering a new world of which I had little knowledge. I knew that the people that I was going to talk to had a wealth of knowledge, much of it inside knowledge that I would not be able to find in a government report. As such, the length of many discussions had to be maintained when presented in the results chapter, meaning, that there were a number of relatively long quotes. However, it is necessary to present such quotes in their fullness so as not to detract from the key informant's true meaning and because much of what was shared by key informants are not recorded in any other document. Age was also a factor that had to be considered as the respect of people older than you is central to Tongan culture. As such, all the key informants had to be paid a high level of respect in terms of language, tone and the overall approach to engaging in dialogue with them.

Whilst conducting research in Tonga had its privileges, such as navigating the area with ease and being able to connect with and relate to key informants, I had to be aware that there were potential drawbacks. A common issue in such situations when the researcher is conducting research in their own home country, is the potential for research bias. Because I had such a personal connection to the country and therefore, the area of study, I had to ensure that I did not allow my emotions and preconceived ideas influence the research outcome. Research bias can manifest at any stage of the research process and is not limited to the data collection period. Therefore, it was imperative that I stayed acutely aware of this, especially when such biases could occur subconsciously. The other issue that I had to consider was the propensity to assume knowledge of an issue if it occurred in a place I was familiar with, such as my home country. Such situations are said to require an open mind and often the adoption of a mindset where the researcher operates under the assumption that they have no knowledge of the issue.

Limitations

The primary limitation was the availability of government documents. As explained previously, the analysis of government documents was identified as one of the key data collection methods. However, Tonga's internet presence is relatively weak, where public documents are not often available on government websites. As such, it was difficult to present an exhaustive list of documents, particularly documents from the early 2000s and beyond those years. The other limitation was the apparent gap in the literature with regard to viewing highly political events through the lens of planning. While the political ramifications are frequently highlighted, the presence of planning in the rebuild process is scarcely considered in global research and even less so, in Pacific research.

Conclusion

This chapter has established the theoretical and methodological underpinnings which have guided this research through its preliminary stages right through to its conclusion. Evidently, the delivery of this research has not been without its challenges, however, the chosen data collection methods, the analysis of the data and the structural approach to its presentation are woven together in a way which ensures that the research questions are sufficiently addressed. The following chapter will contextualise the scope of the research and provide an overview of planning in the Pacific and its challenges and successes to date.

Introduction to Results

A Brief History of the 1875 Constitution

Before the results from the data collection are examined, it is important to first understand the historic setting from which the idea of planning stems in the Tongan context. Due to its multidisciplinary nature, planning as a field has a plethora of titles which in practice, often have identical functions (Castells, 2010). Such titles include urban planning, town planning, environmental planning or simply planning depending on the preference of the country or locality (Castells, 2010). In Tonga today, it is referred to as urban planning (Asian Development Bank, 2018). While it is now an established field in numerous developed countries, its roots in Tonga can be traced back to the 1875 Constitution which was implemented during the reign of King George Tupou I (Halatuituia, 2002; Pelesikoti, 2003). The 1875 Constitution essentially became the blueprint for modern Tonga and was also a significant influencing factor in how planning was allowed to develop over time (Halatuituia, 2002; Pelesikoti, 2003). As such, it is appropriate to set the scene for the results chapters with a brief account of the 1875 Constitution and its relevant parts.

The overarching purpose of the Constitution was to ensure that Tonga was safeguarded from the looming threat of colonisation (Morton, 2000). This is reflected in King George Tupou I's closing remarks at the close of parliament that same year:

"We and our descendants must own Tonga for ever. Let it be written in your hearts these words, Tonga for the Tongans [Tonga ma'a Tonga]" (Havea 1975b:104).

As such, the Constitution had a strong focus on land, the provisions of which are predominantly addressed in Part III of the Constitution titled "The Land" (Constitution of Tonga, 1875). The other two parts of the Constitution set out certain human rights afforded to the people and the aspects and form that government in Tonga must take

(Constitution of Tonga, 1875). Thus, land is the only national asset addressed in an individual section, highlighting its significance in the Tongan culture and way of life (Constitution, 1875; Nayacakalou, 1959). The Constitution had four key outcomes with specific implications for planning (Constitution of Tonga, 1875). Firstly, with regard to land, the Constitution gave power to the king and from the king to the minister of land (Constitution of Tonga, 1875). Secondly, the Constitution dealt with the registration of land (Constitution of Tonga, 1875). Thirdly, it ensured that the line of succession for land rights were passed through the male heir and finally according to Tukua Tonga the Director of the Planning and Urban Management Agency (PUMA), inherent in the constitution, is the duty to manage the land sustainably, which had not been addressed for so long.

“The fourth one was silent for so long. The fourth one is actually how you manage the land, so the emphasis in the constitution; koe oatu ae mafai kia koe (the responsibility is given to you)... once you get your piece of land, whether it’s leased, it’s your castle, koe tangata’i fonua Tonga (a Tongan person of the land), man and women. So, we’ve come to an age now where there’s so much development and we have to manage it and monitor compliance because there’s a lot of construction and there has to be some sort of standard that’s to be met.”

While the duty to care for the land was temporarily set aside in the pursuit of development and expansion, efforts have been made over time to prioritise environmental protection and the proper management of development (Low, 1981). The 2006 Riots further re-emphasised the importance of this and since then, there has been a significant movement to enhance the presence and influence of planning in Tonga (Asian Development Bank, 2018). These developments will be elaborated on in the results chapters, the structure of which is discussed below.

Results Structure

In total, there are two results chapters. The first chapter addresses planning in Tonga before the riots and the second assesses the ‘planning reform’ which took place as a result. In conjunction, they establish a timeline with the Riots as the independent variable

and highlights key developments in Tonga's planning process. As the results are set out in a timeline format, having a single in-depth introduction is more appropriate as it provides a holistic view before the two halves of the timeline are examined separately. As such, an overview of the aspects and content for both chapters will be provided in this section.

As previously expressed, the first chapter forms the first half of the timeline and as such, answers the first research question which addresses the planning processes that existed in Tonga prior to the 2006 Riots. The second chapter is then based on the second and third research questions. The second research question addresses the planning tools and frameworks that were developed after the riots and the third research question asks whether government officials in key enforcement agencies think that the current planning tools and frameworks have achieved their purposes. It also addresses whether the key informants deem the current planning tools and frameworks sufficient to tackle Tongatapu's current and projected urban infrastructure pressures.

While the overall format of the results chapters seeks to portray a timeline, the first chapter is not arranged chronologically. Instead, it is assessed according to the hierarchy of government documents. As such, national level instruments will be discussed first, followed by plans and project reports from individual government agencies. As the presence of planning was not as strong before the 2006 Riots, resources are limited to set out a comprehensive timeline. Thus, setting it out by way of the hierarchy of government documents, offered a more succinct picture in terms of what constituted planning in Tonga before the Riots.

Both chapters contain in depth accounts of the key planning documents relevant to each time frame. The planning documents are then further supplemented by the perceptions of current and former government officials from key planning-related agencies in Tonga. The reflections offered by key informants show how effective the past planning frameworks were and how effective the current planning frameworks have been in their experiences as key enforcement agents. These perceptions are central to the overall research as it gives insight into how planning has evolved in Tonga and in doing so, provides answers for all three research questions identified in chapter one. While the

first two questions are fact-based, the third research question is designed to deduce a holistic and in-depth picture of how planning processes have developed in Tonga since it's rise after the 2006 riots.

The Evolution of Government Ministries in Tonga

A final matter to take note of before delving into the results is the different names that key government ministries have had over time. This is important to acknowledge as there are instances in both results chapters where different names are stated depending on the year of the corresponding framework being discussed and because some key informants have used those names interchangeably. One such ministry is the Ministry of Works (MOW) as it was called before 2014. In 2014, it then merged with the Ministry of Transport to form what has since been known as the Ministry of Infrastructure (MOI) (Ministry of Infrastructure, 2018). Another government body that is often mentioned is the Department of Environment (DOE). In 2001, it was established to manage the sustainable use and management of Tonga's natural resources as well as the conservation of biodiversity (Ministry of Environment and Climate Change (MECC), 2018). Since its establishment in 2001, it has moved under the institutional umbrella of several different ministries (MECC, 2018). The latest development occurred in 2018, where it was one of many government bodies that merged to form the Ministry of Meteorology, Energy, Information, Disaster Management, Environment, Climate Change and Communications (MEIDECC) (Ministry of Information and Communications, 2019).

The constant restructuring of the government ministries in Tonga have simply been due to the shifting leadership regimes which many other countries experience when political cycles end and restart again. Naturally, every new administration has their own priorities and brings in their own ideas which sometimes alters the previous system in substantial ways, which is what happened in Tonga particularly with the recent rise of democracy, of which the Riots was a direct product.

This introduction provides a deeper understanding of the Tongan world view. This is important as it contextualises planning in Tonga and ensures that the reader appreciates the broader picture and the values which continue to influence planning in Tonga.

Results 1: Before the Riots

Introduction

As alluded to in the joint introduction, this chapter will establish the extent and form in which planning existed before the 2006 Riots. In that regard, the planning related frameworks that were developed and operational prior to 2006 will be examined alongside a number of correlating reflections shared by key informants. Though this research endeavoured to provide an account of frameworks that existed as far back from 2006 as possible, many of the government publications from the early 2000s and prior to those years exist only as hardcopies and were difficult to access. However, the frameworks and official reports that are discussed in this chapter still provides a window, albeit small, into the early days of planning in Tonga and its subsequent development till the unfortunate events of 2006. The first planning documents that will be examined are the national development plans, followed by an overview of relevant legislative frameworks. Finally, reports pertaining to a project called the Tonga Integrated Urban Development Project will be discussed based on it being the first project which highlighted the importance of effective urban planning for Tonga.

When discussing the state of planning in Tonga before the Riots with key informants, the focus was on what those processes were and how effective they found them when working within those processes as enforcement agents. During these discussions, the key informants focused on the economic nature of planning in Tonga before the Riots and what they knew of the Planning Division that existed within the Ministry of Lands and Natural Resources at that time. As the time period in question is well over a decade ago, many of the key enforcement agents that were active during that time either no longer work in that space today or have moved abroad. Therefore, many of them could not be reached during the data collection period and this is reflected in the very brief number of

key informant reflections in this chapter. Whilst a small number of key informants were present before 2006 and thus, were able to share from personal experiences, some of the perceptions presented in this chapter are from current key enforcement agents that have knowledge of pre-2006 planning processes despite not being in that space at the time.

It is important to note that the views expressed by key informants are their views and opinions shared in retrospect of those processes. Therefore, the results discussed in this chapter cannot be regarded as a representation of the general perception at that time. However, it does sufficiently provide an indication of the processes which existed previously and allows for a comparison with the current planning practice that will be discussed in the following chapter.

The Frameworks

Tonga's National Development Plans

In light of the unprecedented growth that Tonga had been experiencing in previous years, during the 1960s the Tongan Government recognised the need to formulate a national guidance document which would highlight the collective vision for any future development in the nation. Development in this context did not just refer to urban development but to development in its broadest sense where the improvement of all facets of society were considered. It was decided that the document would be called a 'Five Year Development Plan' and as its title infers, an updated plan would be prepared every five years. The intent was for it to set out certain goals for key sectors in the country in order to guide growth over the future five-year period. The key sectors included the standard indicators of wellbeing for any nation such as economy, education and health among other concerns. In addition to these national goals, the plans would also detail the strategies that the government intended to implement in order to accomplish those goals.

It was decided that the Central Planning Department under the Ministry of Finance would be responsible for developing the plans and that it would be mandatory for all government ministries to adhere to it when developing their own policies, plans and projects. Eventually, the first Five Year Development Plan (DP1) was formalised and

released in 1966, setting out the projected development direction for Tonga till 1970. However, it was not till the Sixth Five Year Development Plan (DP6) (1991-1995) that environmental issues were brought to the fore and highlighted as a matter of national significance. As such, the DP6 will be explored in more detail below.

The Sixth Five Year Development Plan (DP6) (1991-1995)

Twenty years and five development plans later, planning and natural resource management finally made its way on to the national planning agenda through the Sixth Five Year Development Plan (DP6) (1991-1995). With its overall vision of achieving *“sustainable economic growth conducive to a higher per capita income”*, the DP6 emphasised that if environmental planning and resource management was made a priority, the country would benefit from financial savings that would otherwise be used on cleaning and revitalisation efforts if urban development were to continue uncontrolled (DP6, 1991). In addition to a reduction in spending, the DP6 stated that effective resource management would also yield positive outcomes for employment opportunities, human health and overall sustainable development, all of which were specified national objectives in the Plan. DP6 was then followed by Strategic Development Plan Seven which is discussed below.

Strategic Development Plan Seven (SDP7) (2000-2003) or (2001-2004)

While the new millennium brought with it the promise of new advancements and solutions for alleviating problems from the previous millennium, it also brought the threat of new challenges as the world became increasingly interconnected. While this was not a particularly worrying issue in the early 1990s, the damaging effects of globalisation had begun to manifest in the early 2000s. Foreign profit-making motivations took precedence over environmental protection, imports were on the rise and commercial ventures funded by foreign investors had caused the depletion of much of the country's natural resources both on land and in the ocean.

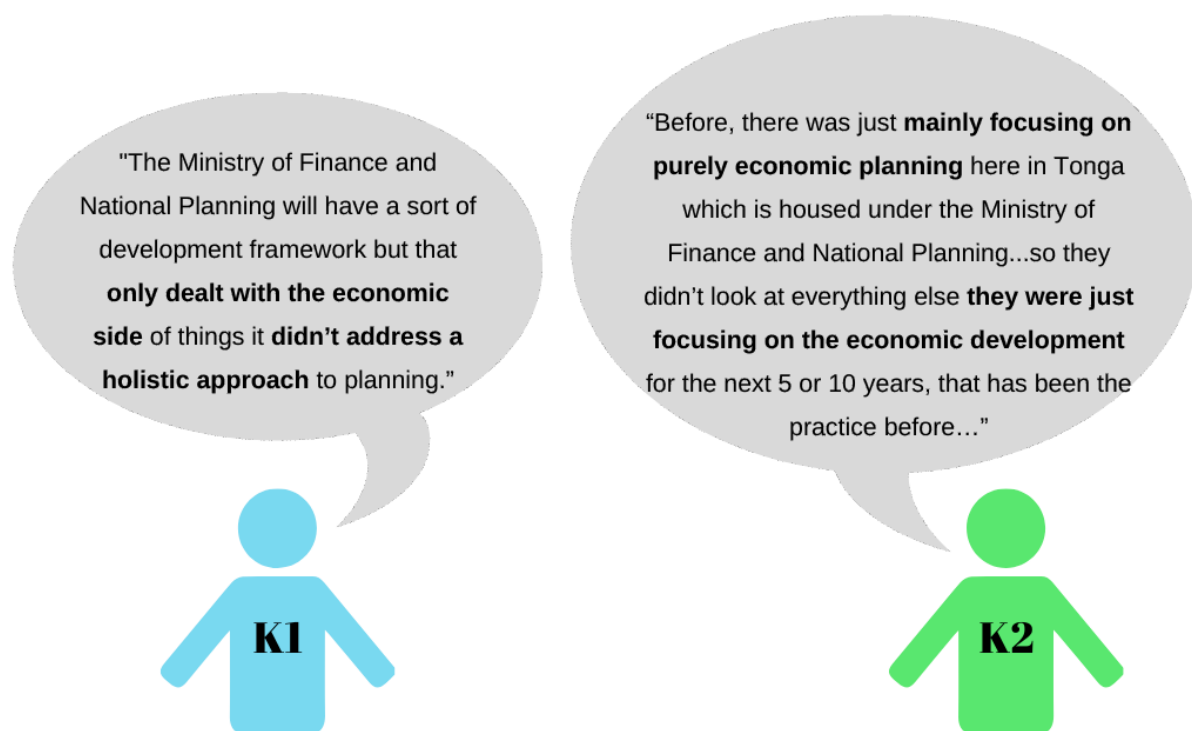
When the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) were developed at the UN Millennium Summit in September of 2000, as one of 147 signatories, Tonga vowed to incorporate the MDGs at a national level and it was clear that the first step was to ensure that they were reflected in the National Five-Year Development Plans (Central Planning Department, 2005). In reassessing their priorities and with the MDGs in mind, the government recognised that their policies needed strengthening and decided that the previous five-year development plans would no longer be sufficient to achieve Tonga's international commitments and national goals (SPREP, 2005). Instead, it was agreed that the plans needed to have a more strategic approach than their predecessors. As such, they were revised and retitled as 'Strategic Development Plans' and would be renewed every three years instead of five to allow the government to capture the rapidly evolving issues and needs of the country.

The order of numbering continued from DP6 and thus, Strategic Development Plan Seven (SDP7) was the first of the strategic development plans and mapped out the strategic direction for Tonga for the years 2001 to 2004. The key point of difference from the previous development plans is that the new plans adopted a more detailed style where goals and objectives were more elaborately defined. This was to ensure that the desired strategic direction and preferred outcomes were well defined and easily identified in order to develop an appropriate plan of action.

SDP7 identified 11 strategic result areas (SRAs), 11 social goals, several priority objectives and defined agriculture, fisheries and tourism as its three priority sectors. While the protection of the environment and physical infrastructure remained as key objectives, these goals were profoundly obscured by the objectives rooted in favourable economic outcomes. Other social goals included improvements to employment levels, education, health and social welfare. The economic nature of the plan was further highlighted in the primary economic goal which was to *"Build a dynamic and highly competitive economy driven mainly by the private sector and [supported by] an efficient public sector"* (Central Planning Department, 2006). This goal was supported by numerous objectives and targets which made up the majority of the Plan. It is clear that the primary strategic focus of SDP7 was driven by economic outcomes with a particular focus on the enhancement of the private sector. SDP7 gave the impression that

recognition as a matter of national significance depended on how well the issue or area performed against economic indicators. This also seems to have been a recurring theme across the previous plans including the 1991 DP6 which acknowledged issues relating to the natural and built environment the most.

The above narratives were also reiterated by Key Informants One (K1) and Two (K2) who both expressed that the system imposed by the national development plans detracted from the ability for ministries to exercise a holistic and encompassing approach to planning.



From the situation depicted by K1 and K2, Figure 10 below provides a visual representation of planning in Tonga. As K1 explained, planning before 2006 lacked the holistic approach which planning represents today. At that time, planning focused solely on the economic aspect (highlighted in green in the figure) and neglected the social, cultural and environmental facets. Each are equally important to consider when planning. The fale (house) in figure 10 thus represents planning in Tonga, the four key areas of society which inform the values and as a collective, make planning the holistic field it is today, are the foundations of the fale (house). The foundation of the fale is weak if only one side is considered.



Figure 10: Model for Planning in Tonga (Drawing of Fale sourced from (Ministry of Education, 2009))

Tonga Strategic Development Plan 8 (SDP8) 2006/07 – 2008/09

[Ministry of Finance and National Planning]

SDP7 was followed by SDP8 which was launched in mid-2006 covering the remainder of 2006 till mid-2009 (SDP8, 2006). As a whole, the Plan portrayed the same emphasis on economic incentives that the previous plans did. However, urban management issues showed a higher representation in SDP8. More specifically, the deteriorating state of infrastructure and more so, the lack of appropriate infrastructure was highlighted as a concern brought up by numerous participants from the community consultations which were carried out across Tonga. Consequently, infrastructure development was a major focus of the SDP8. The SDP8 also highlighted the need for a urban planning and management strategy for Tonga.

Relevant Legislative Frameworks

In terms of legislative frameworks relevant to planning, the Land Act 1903 and the Environmental Impact Assessment Act 2003 were the two key pieces of legislation that were developed before 2006. In the absence of a single planning or resource management act, these two Acts provided the legislative framework in which planning was delivered

before 2006 and as such, it is important to acknowledge them. Both Acts have been revised and consolidated with the most recent editions released in 2016. While this was the first revision for the Environmental Impact Assessment Act, the Land Act has been amended several times over the years since 1903 before its most recent consolidation in 2016. Both Acts will be discussed briefly in the paragraphs to follow. If the Land Act is accompanied with a year, this refers to the Act as it existed in that year, however, if the Land Act is referred to solely as the Land Act, that is referring to the 2016 consolidated version and likewise for the Environmental Impact Assessment Act.

The Land Act: Tonga's Land Tenure System

As stipulated above, the Land Act was first passed in 1903. However, it was superseded by the Land Act 1927 which laid the legal framework for Tonga's land tenure system. In giving effect to the 1875 Constitution which was discussed in the introduction to the results chapters, the Land Act 1927 confirmed the Minister of Land's authority as the Crown's representative in all matters related to Land in Tonga. It defined land as being all land and its resources such as biodiversity and minerals and since water was regarded as a mineral, the Act therefore covered all land above and below water. Though there are multiple facets to the Land Act, there are a number of key provisions which form the basis of Tonga's land tenure system. Part one of the Act is opened with the declaration that all land of the Kingdom [*of Tonga*] belongs to the Crown. As such, this means that no one except the Crown has freehold ownership over land in Tonga and thus, immediately sets the scene for Tonga's land tenure system. The Act then establishes several estates and types of tenures and details the criteria for land holders of each tenure. For an easier read, these estates and tenures are presented in table 2 below.

Table 2: Key Tenure Types established by the Land Act

Tenure Type	Tenure Duration	Who is this for?
Hereditary estate	Life interest	A Noble or Chief.
Royal estate	Life interest	The Sovereign.
Royal family estate	Life interest	A member of the royal family.
Town allotment (Api kolo)	Life interest	Tongan males 16 years old or older.
Tax allotment (Api tukuha)	Life interest	Tongan males 16 years old or older.
Leases	<u>Hereditary estates:</u> Maximum of 99 years. <u>Town Allotments:</u> Usually maximum of 99 years. <u>Tax Allotments:</u> Maximum of 50 years <i>for Tongan subjects.</i> Maximum of 20 years <i>for all others.</i>	Includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • women • foreigners • religious body • charitable or social organisation.
Permits	Term specified in permit.	Alternative to lease.
Teacher's allotment	Term of office.	Male head teacher of any Government Primary School.

As displayed in Table 2 above, the Act administered several types of tenures to cater for various situations. All tenure types apart from the teacher's allotment can be registered thus, giving the protection of indefeasibility if land rights are ever challenged. Under the Act, Crown land was the land remaining after hereditary estates were divided and allocated. From the Crown land, portions would then be set aside for the royal estates and

royal family estates. After this allocation, the remaining Crown land is what was then administered by the Minister of Lands on behalf of the Crown. In terms of land for the 16-year-old and older Tongan males outside of the estate arrangements, they were provided for in the form of allotments. There are two key allotments in the Act; the town allotment (*api kolo*) and the tax allotment (*api tuku hau*). The idea was that the town allotment (*api kolo*) would be where the land holder resided and had his home and the tax allotment (*api tuku hau*) would be used for agriculture purposes where he could farm the land for crops. These allotments were usually given by nobles or chiefs taken from their own hereditary estates. While these were often given as gifts by nobles to people in the village or villages which they presided over, the total land mass designated as hereditary estates were also relatively larger than the Crown land. While no fees had to be paid on town allotments, it was required that fees or 'rent' would be paid on tax allotments, the amount of which was specified in the Act. Depending on who gave the allotment, this fee had to be paid to either the noble or the Crown.

As displayed in the table above, groups such as women and foreigners were then allowed land holding rights through tenures such as leases or permits, with a special tenure for the head teachers of government primary schools. Though Tongan women were allowed to register allotments in special cases pursuant to the criteria and processes set out in the Act, there was no such allowance for foreigners. The sale of any land in Tonga was also prohibited and not even the Sovereign was exempt from this rule.

While the Act has undergone a number of amendments over the years with land mortgages being allowed and extending the length of leasing periods during the 1970s, the fundamentals of the land tenure system have remained unchanged to this day. With particular importance for planning, the allocation of land for public purposes is governed by sections 138 and 141 of the Act. Section 138 of the Act gives the Minister of Lands the authority to reserve portions of Crown Land for public purposes and lists *roads, public ways, commons, cemeteries, school sites, playgrounds and public health purposes* as examples of what those purposes might be. Section 141 then states that land may be taken from any land holder if authorised by the King and approved by the Privy Council. In such a situation, the Minister of Lands would then ensure that the land holder is appropriately compensated either financially or with an alternative parcel of land.

Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Act 2003

If further degradation to the environment was to be avoided, the government realised that development projects could no longer continue to operate without first going through a formal environmental screening process. Development projects needed to have clearly defined parameters to operate within and it was from this purpose that the EIA Act 2003 was developed and passed as law. The Act required that all development applications had to be accompanied by an Environmental Impact Assessment and specified several potential outcomes for the Minister [*for the Environment*] to consider when assessing each application. The Act also defined projects that would be deemed as 'major projects' and established an Environmental Committee for the purpose of reviewing those major project applications.

Other relevant legislation:

In addition to the Land Act and the Environmental Impact Assessment Act 2003, there were also a number of other legislations relevant to planning. While not as significant as the Land Act and the EIA Act, it is still important to acknowledge their existence in order to provide a complete representation of the legislative frameworks that bear some connection to planning. These legislations are organised in the table below including the government agency that was responsible for administering them. As shown in the Table 3 below, these responsibilities were disseminated across a number of different institutions.

Table 3: Other Relevant Legislation

Legislation	Implementing Government Agency
Parks and Reserves Act 1976	Ministry of Lands, Survey and Natural Resources
Garbage Act 1949	Ministry of Health
Water Board Act 2000	Tonga Water Board
Waste Management Act 2005	Ministry of Environment and Climate Change – Waste Authority
Forests Act 1961	Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry
Emergency Management Act 2007	

The National Spatial Planning Management Bill

Prior to the Riots, the NSPM Bill was brought to parliament for deliberation. However, due to the sensitivity surrounding the issue of land, it was met with opposition and did not proceed.

“I think the Planning Bill was already in place. It had suffered some setbacks only because it was a proposal that impacted the Tongan people’s land.” K9

The Tonga Integrated Urban Development Project – Asian Development Bank (ADB)

Established in the 1960s, the Asian Development Bank (ADB) is a multilateral development finance institution that operates with the vision of alleviating extreme poverty in the Asia and Pacific Regions. In an effort to realise this vision, the ADB along with its partners provides loans, grants and technical assistance to developing member countries. The provision of a grant versus a loan depends on the receiving country’s social and economic conditions. Before funding is approved, the project which the member

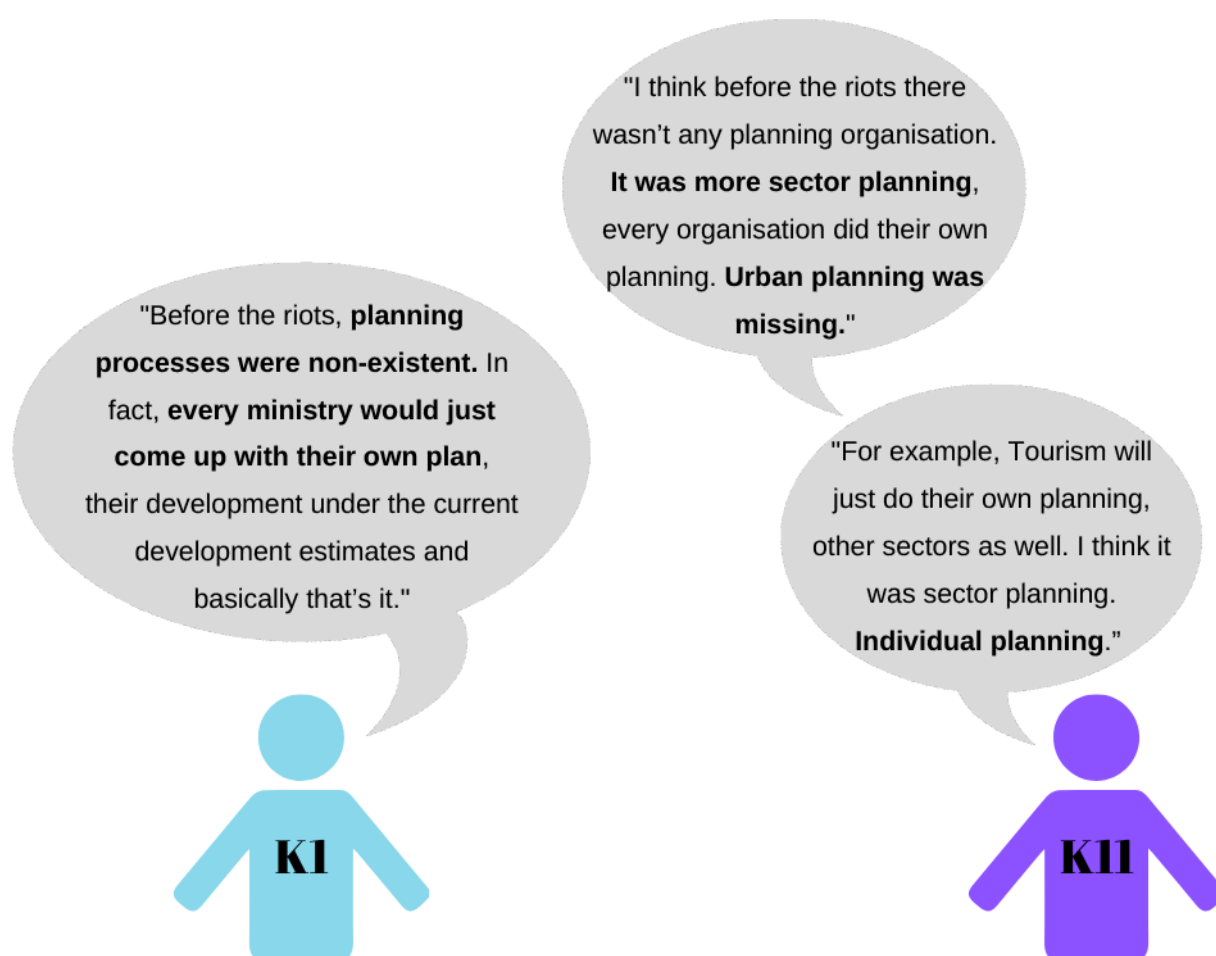
country requested assistance with is assessed to determine whether it is likely to yield positive results for overall development and economic growth for that country.

In 2004, the Tongan Government approached the Asian Development Bank for assistance with urban management. This was given in the form of the Tonga Integrated Urban Development Project, which was Tonga's first formal introduction to planning as it exists today. This was in light of the consistent rising trend of urbanization and its associated pressures, particularly on the urban infrastructure. At the time, the latest census was the 1996 census which put Tonga's total population at 102,370 with 61,422 of those people living in Tongatapu. Approximately 25% of Tongatapu's population were then living in the Nuku'alofa urban area. This put the urbanization rate at 0.8% per year and in relation to the annual 0.6% rate that population was increasing at, this meant that the amount of people moving into the Nuku'alofa urban area was rising faster than the total population of Tongatapu. However, as these figures were from 1996, the ADB's technical assistance report warned that the urbanization rate that Tonga was experiencing then in 2004 and 2005 would almost certainly be higher as government predictions indicated a significant surge in urbanization since 1996.

After consideration and witnessing the urbanization issues that Tonga was facing, the ADB approved the Tongan government's request in that same year (2004). It was decided that the project would target the provision of basic social services such as drainage and general living conditions in low-lying areas of the Nuku'alofa urban area. The overall outcome was then defined as the advancement of Tonga's urban planning and management abilities. The project was scheduled across two phases over a period of 13 months beginning in January 2006 and funded by the Government of Japan on a grant basis through a scheme called the Japan Special Fund. The first phase would involve developing an urban planning and management strategy (UPMS) for Tonga to help resolve what the technical assistance report referred to as the "*ad hoc approach to urban management*" that existed in Tonga.

The technical assistance (TA) report emphasised that the reason urban management was carried out in such an ad hoc manner was because urban management responsibilities were divided amongst too many different government agencies. This would also be

consistent with the various legislative frameworks spread across different government agencies identified in the previous section. These observations were also shared by K1 and K11. K1 discussed that before 2006, ministries each developed their own plans in accordance with the relevant national development plan, a situation which K11 referred to as sector or individual planning. As K11 stated, urban planning was missing, Tonga lacked an integrated approach to planning and the Tonga Integrated Urban Development Project sought to remedy that.



ADB's TA report also identified the relevant government agencies and what their responsibilities were in relation to planning. In order to highlight this situation, these details are presented in table form below just as the legislative frameworks were.

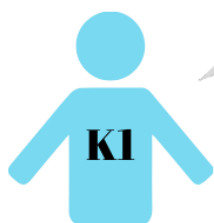
Table 4: Government Agencies Responsible for Planning

Government Agency	Mandate
Central Planning Department (CPD) <i>[within the Ministry of Finance]</i>	To oversee and manage all development assistance given to Tonga. Also responsible for the development of the country's national planning documents discussed at the start of this chapter.
The Ministry of Lands and Survey	Responsible for producing maps and mapping data, assigning land allocations and the registration of land.
The Ministry of Works (MOW)	Responsible for processing building permits and civil works such as roads and drainage.
The Tonga Water Board	Responsible for the provision of safe and potable water to urban areas.
The Ministry of Health	Responsible for reviewing building designs to determine compliance with sanitation requirements. Also responsible for the collection of solid waste.

The second phase of the project then involved the drafting of a conceptual design and conducting a feasibility study for the ADB financing arrangement, also to be carried out during the final phase. In terms of the implementation of the project, it was decided that the Ministry of Finance would be the Executing Agency and that the Implementing Agency would be the Ministry of Works. However, as reflected in Table 4 above, because there were many different government agencies that would be stakeholders, a Steering Committee consisting of representatives from each of them would be established so that all interested parties could meet regularly to monitor the progress of the project.

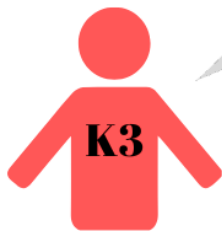
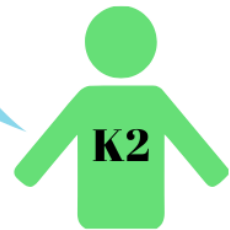
Planning Division within the Ministry of Lands and Natural Resources

According to key informants two, three and six, there was a small-scale planning division under the Ministry of Lands, Survey and Natural Resources (MLSNR). However, finding official government documents that mention its existence proved difficult. The responsibilities of the planning division were limited to managing the land registration database. As K3 stated, planning processes existed but lacked any real authority. K2 further stated that the tasks carried out by this division were extremely limited and did not at all represent the true essence of planning. K1 explained how development applications were managed without any proper processes in place. As the scope of the planning division under the MLNR did not extend to cover development applications, it is highly likely that relatively small-scale developments such as plaques or archways were considered and granted in the ad hoc manner that K1 described.



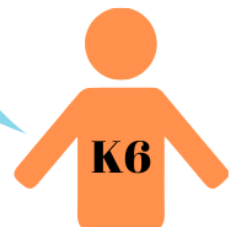
"Basically, nothing existed back then, **it was ad hoc**, they just write to the minister and the minister grant them the right of way to put up a plaque or an archway or..."

"There was a sort of town planning section, **a small small section** within the Ministry of Lands and Natural Resources but it was **a one-man band mainly focusing on building permits**. So that was the main task of town planning; when the application comes they will check whether the land is leased, registered or whatever. That was my understanding, prior to that I do not think there was urban planning, development consent process was of course never heard of..."



"Planning processes existed but **rather weak** and still is today with enforcement and compliance."

"The division which existed prior to the riots was known as **the sub-divisional/planning division**. It was responsible for **the design and legal division of land for separate ownership**. It operated as one of the core functions for the Ministry."



Conclusion

Before the Riots, planning was mainly of an economic nature. There was no regard for the involvement of the natural environment, culture or social implications within the scope of planning for development. However, with assistance from an ADB project, it was highlighted that Tonga needed to adopt an integrated approach to planning with regard to managing urban growth. Due to the sensitivity of land issues, attempts to establish a planning authority through the NSPM Bill were unsuccessful. The impacts that the Riots had on furthering this agenda will be discussed in the following chapter.

Results 2: After the Riots

Introduction

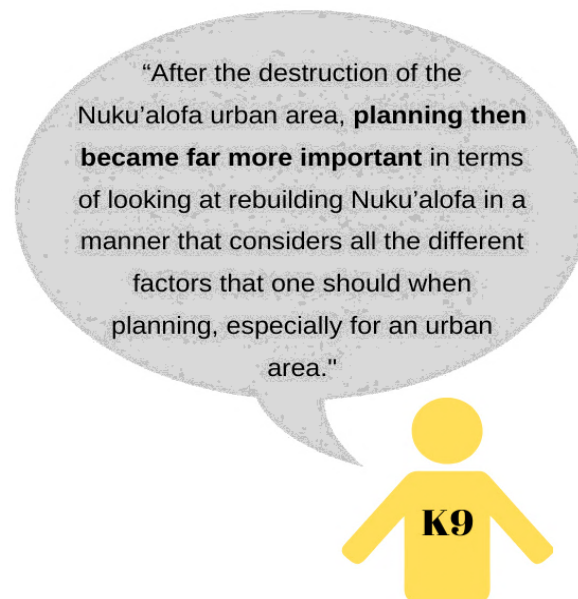
Now that the first half of the timeline has been established in the previous chapter, the current chapter seeks to examine the development of planning immediately following the Riots up to the current day. Whilst the previous chapter was structured according to the hierarchy of government documents, such a layout did not offer a logical flow for the present chapter. Therefore, a more chronological arrangement was adopted where firstly, the planning response immediately following the Riots is addressed to which a timeline is followed. It should be noted that many of the issues raised in this chapter are interlinked and thus, though separated and assessed individually, there will be noticeable overlap in the content discussed by key informants.

The 2006 Riots

This section will first take note of what key informants had to say when reflecting on the Riots and the impact that it had on planning for Tonga. As the focal event for this study and the starting point of the time period in question for this chapter, it is appropriate to begin with these discussions. The reflections of key informants in this chapter also form the basis of this entire study, as it establishes whether or not the Riots were a key determinant in the recognition of the importance of planning in Tonga. Therefore, starting with the Riots ensures that the information presented in this chapter flows logically and, in a manner, which highlights the development of planning since the event.

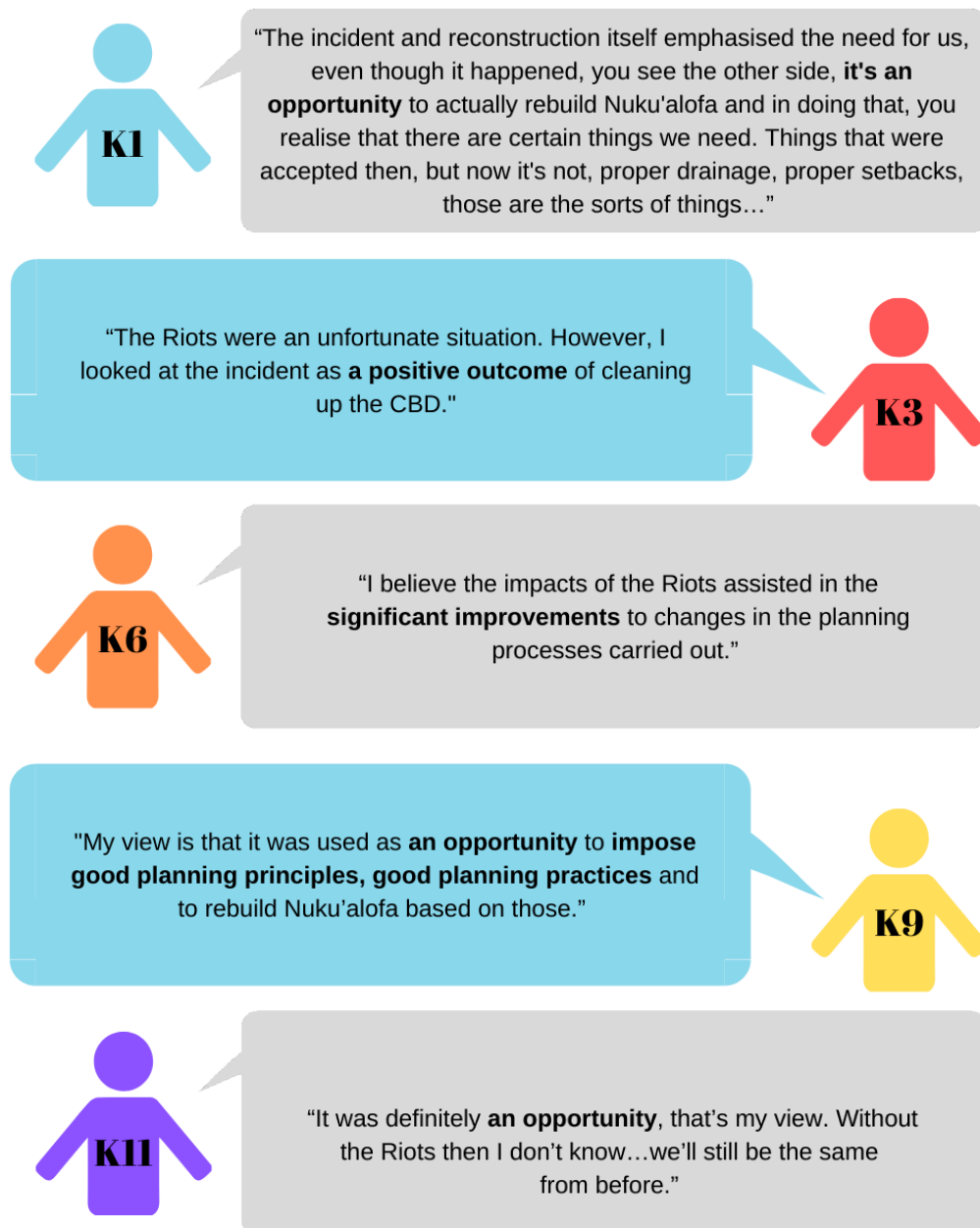
As revealed in the previous chapter, before 2006, Tonga lacked the holistic form which effective planning is known to represent today. Planning process was scattered across a number of government agencies and the primary focus of the planning division that did

exist, was the management of land registration information. Though it had been acknowledged in the past that an integrated and more formal approach to planning was vital for improved urban management in Tonga, the key informants affirmed that it was not until the Riots that the significance of this became abundantly clear. Key Informants four and nine discuss this moment of realization below.



"It was a highly political issue but what was obvious was that our planning was not prepared for such an event, to manage the kind of political risks and just safety. Like if there's a fire you have adequate fire services to put it out, but that was not the case. So, it reflected a big gap. Like even just safety issues when you put too many people together." K4

In this same regard, many of the key informants with planning backgrounds, whilst acknowledging that it was a horrifying event, stated that in terms of planning, the Riot was Tonga's opportunity to finally establish the appropriate planning processes. As indicated by the Key Informants below, it was also an opportunity to build a more appropriate Central Business District (CBD) with the services and amenities capable of withstanding the needs of a growing population.



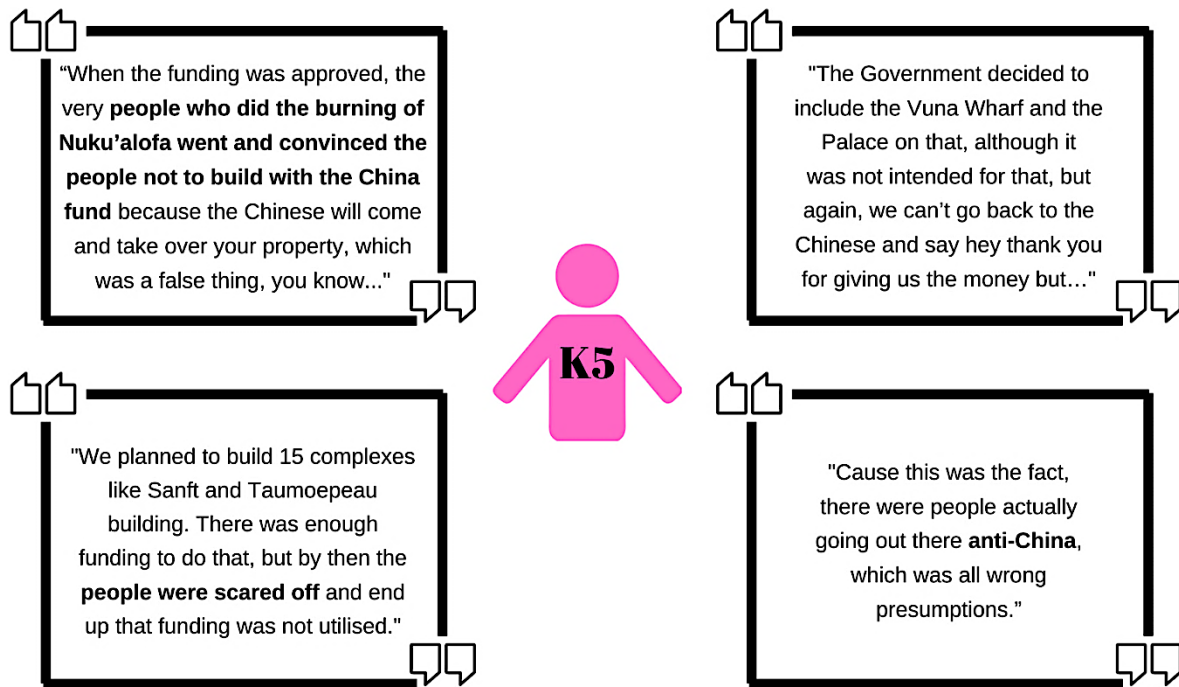
The fact that many of the key informants chose to acknowledge the impact that the Riots had on planning in this way, confirms that it was a pivotal turning point in the development of planning in Tonga. As K1 expressed above, the rebuild itself drew attention to a number of basic infrastructure needs outside the scope of the rebuild that were absent in the previous design of the Nuku'alofa Urban Area. Thus, not only did the Riots emphasize the importance of planning, allowing Tonga to develop and grow in that space, it also allowed the authorities to reassess the structural design of the CBD and to make the necessary adjustments during the rebuild efforts.

Following the Riots, the rebuild itself manifested as a highly contentious issue which is still widely discussed to this day. Thus, as expected, the key informants that were present or involved during the rebuild efforts focused a great deal on discussing that moment in time and their reflections are addressed in the following sub-section.

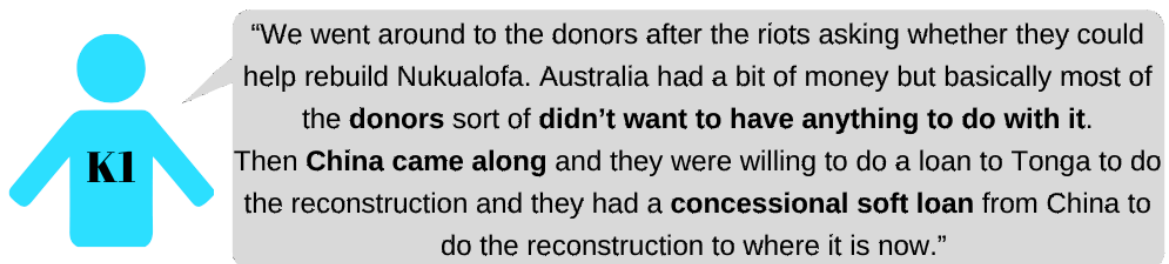
The Rebuild

The China Loan

Though there were multiple causes for dispute during the rebuild, the main subject of debate was and continues to be the China loan. In 2007, the Tongan Government and the China Export Import (EXIM) Bank agreed on a concessional loan of 440 million yuan (approximately 72 million USD) at an interest rate of 2%, to fund the reconstruction of Nuku'alofa's CBD (Robertson, 2013; Dornan and Brant, 2014). The Government's plan for the loan was two-fold. It was intended that part of the loan would be used to on-lend to affected private businesses in the CBD, and that the rest would then be used to carry out an array of necessary civil works (Dornan and Brant, 2014). However, being in a key position in the Ministry of Works during the rebuild, K5 explained that due to fears of Chinese control, the funds were ill-received by the public and thus, the scale of reconstruction that the Government envisaged was not accomplished. As K5 explains below, because many of the private businesses refused the funding from China, it was then used for a number of renovation projects outside the scope of the CBD reconstruction and the impacts of the Riots.



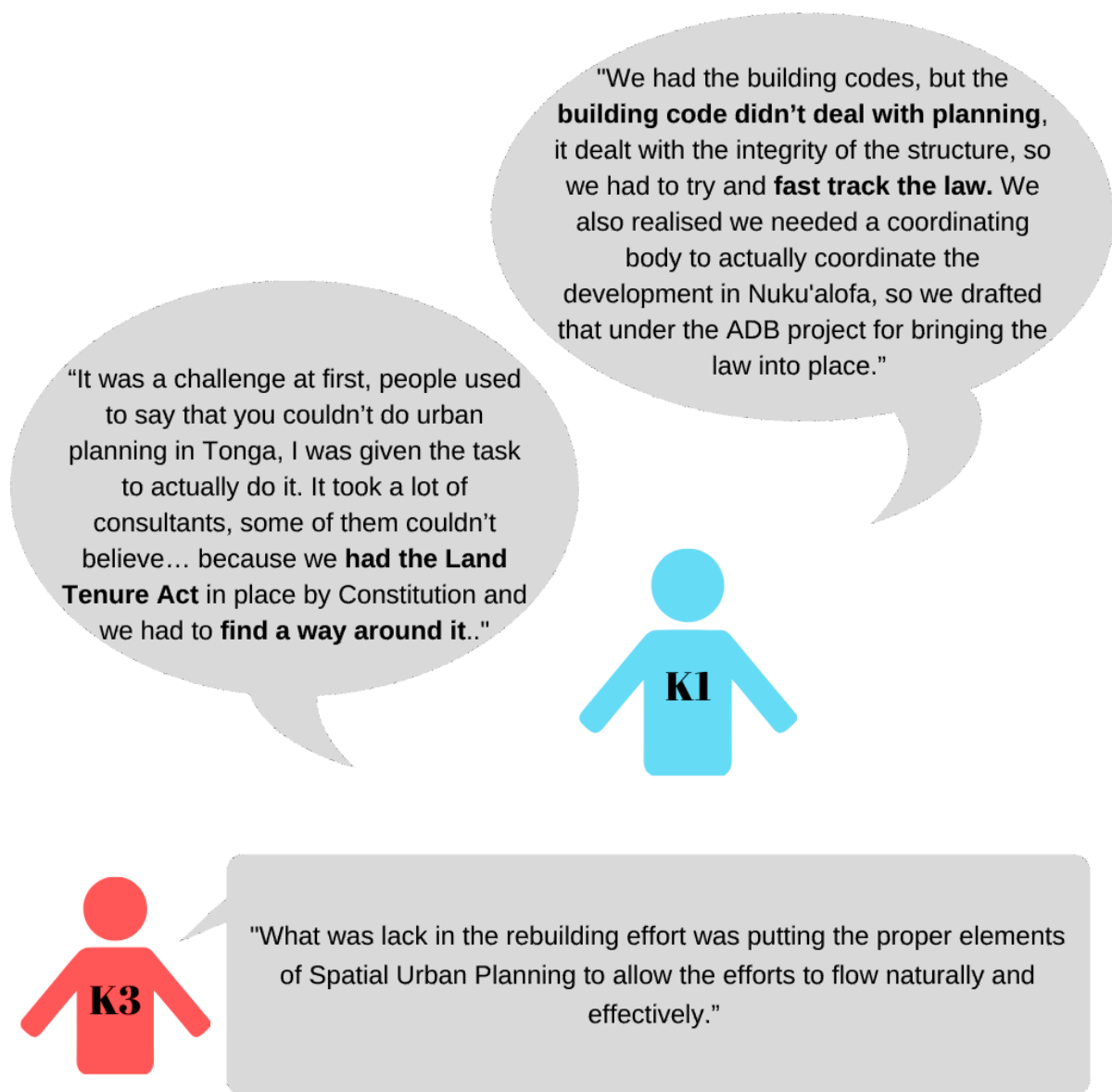
The Government received ongoing public criticism for putting the country into a financial debt to China, which is near impossible to repay. However, K1, a planner who was brought in to assist with the rebuild efforts, explained that the loan was a necessity since Tonga simply did not have the money to fund such a rebuild. Thus, when there was negligible help from the usual foreign aid donors, the offer from China was the only viable option.



K1 then went on to explain some of the more technical challenges that the rebuild presented. These, along with other challenges that were identified by other key informants are explored in the next sub-section.

Challenges during the Rebuild

As established in the previous chapter, Tonga did not have any specific planning processes or frameworks in place before 2006. As K1 explains below, this proved to be a further barrier in the reconstruction efforts.



As K1 explained, the systems that were in place did not support the implementation of planning at the macro level that was needed. As K3 put it, the absence of an established planning process was a key factor that hindered the rebuild efforts. Frameworks needed to be put in place and with the help of numerous consultants, attempts were made to

finally establish Tonga's first specific planning Act. In addition to the need for fast tracking the frameworks and associated planning processes, there was also the matter of the land tenure system established by the Land Act which was discussed in the previous chapter. While the Land Act allowed land to be acquired for public purposes, this could only be done at the behest of the King, which was an unlikely occurrence. As such, it would make planning for public infrastructure such as drainage systems which might need to traverse private property, a particularly arduous task.

In addition to the need for funding and developing formal planning processes, the rebuild efforts needed experienced planners to actually implement the necessary changes. As the planning discipline was only just being introduced in Tonga, it was crucial to have consultants from outside the country work through what needed to be done with the very few trained local planners that were present at the time. As part of these efforts, the then Prime Minister Feleti Sevele requested the help of planners from the Manukau City Council (Manukau City Council, 2006). A team from the Council travelled to Tonga in 2007 to assist with the reconstruction and were one of the first groups of consultants that arrived to help (Manukau City Council, 2007). Key Informant Six, a senior surveyor in the Ministry of Lands, Survey and Natural Resources (MLSNR) who was involved in the reconstruction, spoke about the visiting team. As he explains below, the team from the Manukau City Council worked together with key enforcement agents from the Ministry (MLSNR) to create a number of tools that would be essential for planning in the future. In addition to this, they also developed the preliminary design for the new CBD.



"Surveyors and planners were sent here to Tonga, they produced topographic maps of the Nuku'alofa Area and the area that had been affected by the Riots. The Ministry also provided further information to help with the designing of town. After the Riots, we did our best alongside international aid such as ADB, World Bank and the loan from China to rebuild the CBD."

In addition to the international aid, local efforts led to the development of a small-scale division within the MLSNR for the specific purpose of providing planning assistance. Today, the Division has grown and is now referred to as the Planning and Urban

Management Agency. Its establishment and subsequent growth will now be discussed in the following section.

The Planning and Urban Management Agency (PUMA)

Continuing with the theme of 'opportunity' evident in the previous section, key informants explained that the Riots were a key event in establishing a specific agency for managing planning in Tonga which is now called the Planning and Urban Management Agency (PUMA). PUMA was first established in 2007 as a small division called the Physical Planning Division under the Ministry of Lands, Survey and Natural Resources (MLSNR). Their primary role was to provide planning oversight during the rebuild efforts. The team was led by trained urban planner, Tukua Tonga, who remains with PUMA as their Director. Tukua Tonga and planners from within PUMA and the MLSNR, K2 and K11 discuss the purpose of PUMA's establishment below. As they explained, while the establishment of PUMA as the Physical Planning Division could have been a temporary arrangement, the Government realised the value in having an agency to coordinate planning efforts for the country, thus, launching PUMA in 2008 and expanding their initial mandate.

"I got transferred into the Ministry in 2007, and this is when Nuku'alofa had the national incident. Now the role that I played when I came in, it used to be called the Physical Planning Division under the Ministry of Lands and basically, we did the reconstruction." Tukua Tonga

"The main purpose of establishing PUMA was when the Government started the re-build, then they maybe did some digging and heard of urban planning and that's how we were established. So, had there not been any national incident, there would never be a PUMA." K2

"PUMA was established after the Riots for the reconstruction of Nuku'alofa, that was the whole purpose of its establishment and I think after the establishment of PUMA it was more recognised then the importance of having a planning agency or organisation here in Tonga." K11

PUMA currently sits under the Ministry of Lands, Survey and Natural Resources (MLSNR) with the Minister for MLSNR as the planning authority. This arrangement was formalised

through the passing of the National Spatial Planning and Management (NSPM) Act in 2012 which will be discussed in further detail when examining the NSPM Act. However, as alluded to below by K1 and K9, the original intention when establishing PUMA was that it would be an autonomous body, exempt from any external interference to ensure that they could carry out their duties effectively.

"It's supposed to be an independent agency, like the Auckland City Council." K1

"The rationale of the idea was that they would be an independent body. But having said that, they retained some ties to the Government by holding the Minister for Lands as the Planning Authority. Several options were looked at, but the idea was to have an independent body to make independent decisions that's not influenced. The political decision I think was then taken to keep it with Government by having a Minister as Planning Authority." K9

Over the years, that initial vision has yet to be realised and PUMA has been moved under various institutional umbrellas in an attempt to determine where their efforts would be most effective. Key Informants Seven, Eight and Nine, all staff members within the MLSNR briefly discussed this and their reflections are presented below. As K7 recalls, the movement was due to the shifting dynamic in Government caused by the political reform, which was also an outcome of the 2006 Riots.

"Originally, PUMA started with the Land and Survey because of the Land Act but since the Government change there has been throwing around for the past five years. 'Cos when the new Government with Lavulavu, they tell them to go and they were base at MOI [Ministry of Infrastructure]. So, when this Government team up, they said to move up here (MLSNR)." K7

"The idea is that PUMA would be an independent agency, but it still sits as a Division under the Ministry of Lands. So, we've even had PUMA move to Infrastructure and those are attempts to see how we integrate Spatial Planning into the existing process." K9

"So the whole thing is this, PUMA, it's not a separate ministry by itself, but still under the Ministry of Lands and Survey, so it depends now on what Government keep changing policy, changing the structure of the Ministry and also their obligation." K12

PUMA'S Role Today

As Tukua Tonga explains below, PUMA's current mandate involves coordinating development and planning efforts across the whole of Tonga, a task which has not always proven to be easy. Key Informants Six and Seven also discussed what they understood about PUMA's responsibilities in urban management with K7 stating that PUMA was not actually fulfilling their rightful duties.

"The role now is to actually monitor. Coordinating, monitoring and establishing, ensuring that development is done. When you walk around town, you can see there are a few things out there like footpaths, where's the handicap, some of the drainage isn't covered and you're walking in the middle, next minute there's a pole there and you wonder... those are the things that we try and look at, it's quite hard." TT

"Basically, that's our role now to coordinate all the development. Everybody gets a development consent now, called a DC once you meet the criteria." TT

"They manage large scale planning such as the planning of Nuku'alofa CBD and includes essential services that would benefit people. Developing new roads, the proposed bridge development from Folaha – 'Anana, 'Umusi. So, when we refer to PUMA we're looking at large scale developments. In regard to sub-divisional design division which is still under the Ministry [MLSNR], we look after smaller scale developments such as town allotments to be subdivided and designed which then gets passed on for registration by separate owners." K6

"They are supposed to dealing with space in area. If you go and look at the development, you know the Natamu Store in town? There is another Chinese restaurant on the other side and then you have another building, just another restaurant, I think that the space is less than half a metre. Their role here is to look at the spacing of the urban space. Maybe it should be like two metre or three metre but they don't monitor what they are doing." K7

In a similar vein with K7's opinion stated above, K5 and K11 were uncertain about PUMA's success since its inception. As K5 indicates below, though their existence shows promise, PUMA has not been afforded the means to actually fulfil their mandate which K11 believes may threaten their future prospects. As K11 discussed, PUMA has been

unable to hold on to several projects that could have enhanced its position within the Ministry and helped it to grow.

“I think that’s a good initiative to set them up but again it’s only good if you give them teeth to bite with. I mean... it’s not just a show, you need to operationalise, make sure they have funding, ‘cos right now they only looking at some of the projects in urban areas, not even half of Tongatapu, let alone outer islands.” K5

“I feel like that if no one is going to do something about it, I guess five or ten years we will see no PUMA. There needs to be constant reminding and pushing management level, whether it’s the Minister and CEO. I think they already recognise within the Ministry, of course but actually there’s multiple issues going on even to personal issues, so that’s where I see PUMA if no one moves things forward now. And to back the answer up, ever since PUMAs establishment, there has been multiple opportunities to host many projects. For example, in 2017 we initiated the Fanga’uta Lagoon bridge and as of last year, it was confirmed that it will move to the Ministry of Infrastructure rather than being hosted by PUMA. There’s also another project, sanitation project, I’ve heard it’s going to be moved to the Natural Resources Division and it’s going to start next year, so that’s the reason.” K11

However, on the other hand, K6, a senior surveyor within the Ministry of Lands, Survey and Natural Resources was more positive about PUMA’s work over the years. As K6 stated below, he believed PUMA had made significant contributions to the implementation of planning in Tonga since they became operational and was confident that they would continue to do so.

“Establishment of PUMA have implemented frameworks and processes for better urban development for the country. I believe going forward PUMA will continue to support and provide significant development for Tonga’s urban/spatial planning.” K6

In terms of the overarching framework, the Strategic Development Plan Eight would have been the national document providing strategic direction immediately after the Riots and throughout the rebuild. Following SDP8, the Government again re-evaluated their approach and rebranded the national guidance documents as ‘Strategic Development Frameworks’. These Strategic Development Frameworks will now be explored in the following section.

The Strategic Development Frameworks

As explained above, the Strategic Development Frameworks replaced the National Development Plans discussed in the previous chapter, as Tonga's overarching national development guidance document. Just like its predecessors, the Strategic Development Frameworks determine the direction of all development efforts in the country. All policies, plans and projects, whether government, private or funded by foreign aid or investments, must be in line with the Strategic Development Frameworks. From the stance of a Division within a Government Ministry, the Head of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Unit within the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change (MECC), Tukia Lepa explains this hierarchical process below:

"So, the Government has what we call 'a ia 'oku ui ko eni ko e [which is called the] NSDF. It's a Ten-Year Plan and that development framework is prepared by the Tonga Ministry of Finance and National Planning. Under that department, there are key ministry who are part of that committee like the Department of Environment and the MEIDECC. From there we build the Corporate Plan. The Corporate Plan is a Three-Year Plan. Then from the Corporate Plan we can develop our own Annual Management Plan, and that is how the system runs."

Since their inception, there have been two National Strategic Development Frameworks (NSDF). The first NSDF was released in 2011 and the second and current NSDF was released in 2015. Both these Frameworks are examined below in terms of their prioritisation of planning and urban management.

Tonga Strategic Development Framework (TSDF) 2011 – 2014

[Ministry of Finance and National Planning]

The development of the first Tonga Strategic Development Framework was set in motion towards the end of SDP8 in late 2009. It was then published in 2011 to guide the direction of development in the country from 2011 to 2014. In constructing the new approach to the national guidance document, the Ministry of Finance and National Planning stated that the detailed format of a plan was only fitting in previous years as the issues that the

country was experiencing then were comparatively limited and contained in nature. Upon deliberation, it was then decided that such a prescriptive approach would not be capable of reflecting the diverse range of issues that were emerging. As such, the shift was made to a broader structure in the form of a framework.

The start of the new frameworks discontinued the previous order of numbering from SDP8 and thus, the first framework was simply titled the Tonga Strategic Development Framework (TSDF). Its overarching vision was *“To develop and promote a just, equitable and progressive society in which the people of Tonga enjoy good health, peace, harmony and prosperity, in meeting their aspirations in life”*. In realising this vision, nine outcome objectives were identified and further supplemented by four themes to guide the implementation of the objectives. The most relevant of the nine objectives were objectives three and seven, the third which addressed the built environment and the latter, the natural environment. The third objective affirmed the need for properly planned and well-maintained infrastructure as a means of fulfilling the TSDF’s vision. The seventh objective then acknowledged the need for *“cultural awareness, environmental sustainability, disaster risk management and climate change adaptation”* in the planning and implementation of all programmes carried out in the relevant Ministries. The enforcement of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) process was defined as the key strategy for accomplishing environmental sustainability. However, the improvement in urban management, which was highlighted as fundamental in the previous SDP8 was no longer addressed in the TSDF. In contrast to the previous plans, there was an element of ambiguity in the TSDF, particularly with addressing a number of related but also distinct issues in a single objective and therefore, not being able to acknowledge the breadth and scale of each issue. However, as was previously stated, this was precisely the intention behind the change in order for the framework to cover a broader scope of issues. Another obvious change was that the TSDF saw issues such as climate change given more recognition on the national agenda where previously, the SDP8 had only briefly addressed it.

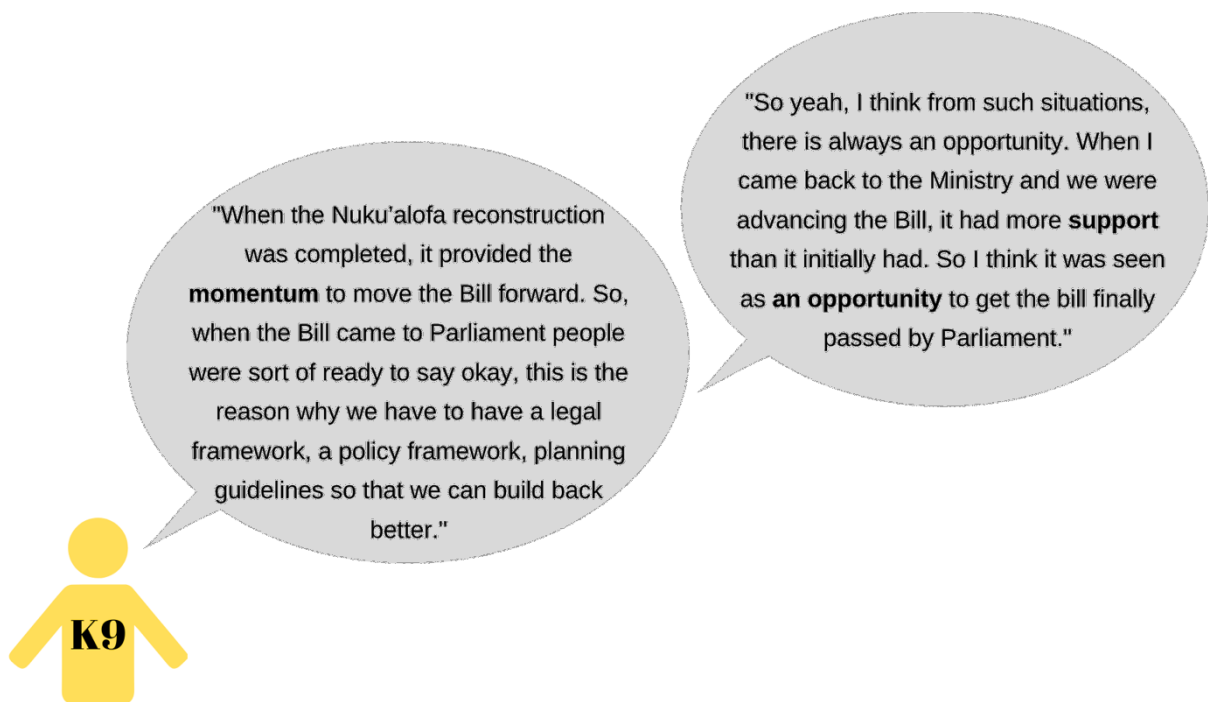
Tonga Strategic Development Framework (TSDF II) 2015 – 2025

The TSDF was then followed by the Tonga Strategic Development Framework II (TSDF II), produced over 2014, then finalised and released in May 2015. It is the current governing strategic development framework and will be till 2025. With a projected duration of ten years, the TSDF II is the national guidance document with the longest active timeframe. It also forgoes the very specific overarching vision which was a characteristic of its predecessors. The TSDF II instead, simply states that it is guided by the national motto *“Ko e Otua mo Tonga ko hoku Tofi’a”* (God and Tonga are my Inheritance) whilst seeking an overall outcome of *“A more progressive Tonga supporting a higher quality of life for all”*. In terms of its structure, to reach this outcome the TSDF II defines seven national outcomes and 29 organisational outcomes grouped across five pillars. From the onset, it is clear that planning issues are more present in TSDF II than any of the previous documents. Three of the seven national outcomes acknowledged the importance of inclusive and sustainable urban development, infrastructure provision and environmental management. Whilst the last two outcomes were recognised as key objectives in the previous TSDF, TSDF II brought back an emphasis on improving land-use planning and urban management which was acknowledged in SDP8 but dropped in the previous TSDF. The current framework also stresses the point that despite a decrease in overall population, internal migration has been rising progressively along with urbanisation concentrated in the Nuku’alofa urban area. As such, the TSDF II states that effective land-use planning is especially essential to manage this rising trend.

Legislative Frameworks

National Spatial Planning and Management (NSPM) Act 2012

As the National Spatial Planning and Management Act (NSPM) 2012 is Tonga’s first legislative planning framework and a direct product of the Riots, a comprehensive summary of the Act will be provided in this section. As mentioned in the previous chapter, a NSPM Bill had been drafted before the Riots, however, it had failed to receive the necessary support to advance through Parliament. According to K9, the aftermath of the Riots provided the incentive needed to finally enact the Bill into law.



As K9 explained above, it took a devastating event such as the Riots for decision makers to both understand and accept the importance of effective planning and thus, put frameworks in place to guide how it is delivered in the Tongan context. The draft Bill was then presented for consideration again in 2010 and after a number of setbacks, King George Tupou VI assented to it on the 17th of September 2012, making it Tonga's first planning act.

The Purpose and Design of the Act

In this sub-section, the overall structure with respect to the key sections and parts of the Act will be examined. The purpose of the Act is stated as providing *"...a framework for planning the use, development, management and protection of land in the Kingdom in the public interest and for related purposes"*. K1 elaborated on this purpose and the rationale behind the Act, and addressed the frequently laid claim that the NSPM Act attempts to override the Land Act. Key Informant One also drew comparisons to the Act's long-established equivalents such as the Resource Management Act 1991 of New Zealand, to highlight the uniqueness of the NSPM Act.

"It's a very unique law because it's not the same as the RMA or the RMA equivalent in Australia because that deals with free-hold and some of it of course is Māori land, so it deals with ownership. Whereas, here, it doesn't propose to make changes to the Land Act, to change the ownership of the land but what it does is it enhances the Land Act with the new processes to the development aspect of the land."

"It trials and shortens the process with the RMA. What it does is it translates the Tongan culture, social status, what they understand and believe and it takes them into the development sort of area/level in the new millennium, but still keeps their inter-relationships."

"It's an interesting Act because it doesn't, it's not like the normal acts overseas where you have their Western concept of, where you have freehold you have schemes you have public right-of-way we do it the Tongan way and we have the hierarchies and the king and it goes through there...so the institutional, the cultural institutions they're there, it strengthens their worldview and where they see themselves." K1

"The Act highlights e anga koe ae nofo fakakainga (the Tongan way of life as a family), it doesn't disturb that." K1

In developing the Act, the Ministry was conscious of the need for a more integrated approach to planning. Thus, it was clear that the first step was to establish a central planning authority. This was done in section three of the Act which established the Minister for Lands as the National Spatial Planning Authority (Authority). The Act then appointed the Planning and Urban Management Division (PUMD) of the Ministry of Lands, Survey and Natural Resources (MLSNR) as the secretariat for the Authority and refers to the PUMD as the 'Agency'. Over the years, the PUMD became rebranded as the Planning and Urban Management Agency (PUMA), better reflecting the responsibilities assigned to it in the Act. Tukua Tonga, the Director of PUMA explains this arrangement:

"We call it the National Spatial Planning Authority Office, that's us. PUMA is the working staff. We don't report to the Minister for Lands, his other portfolio is the National Spatial Planning Authority, he's the Planning Authority. So his office has been established as the National Spatial Planning Authority Office or NSPAO."

To support its implementation and the work of the Authority and Agency, the Act also sought to create an Advisory Committee and a Planning Tribunal. The intent for the Advisory Committee is that it would provide advice on planning matters that the Authority requested counsel on. The Planning Tribunal would then provide a platform for applicants to appeal decisions made by the NSPAO. However, both bodies have yet to be established. A bulk of the concern is that such systems act to diminish the King's authority.

In addition to urging the development of these supporting bodies, the Agency is also currently working on establishing planning standards to guide all development in the Kingdom. The intention to establish planning standards is highlighted in Section 27 of the Act. However, K2, a PUMA staff member who is leading the development of these standards explains that it has been a particularly challenging task due to the novelty of the idea of planning standards and planning in general.

"At the moment I'm looking at planning standards so basically setting out strategies and the guidelines. It's challenging because there's nothing that's been done like that here in Tonga so of course we have to look at outside models and try to fit that into the context of Tonga while asking, is that practical? Because like I said everything is new." K2

In guiding its newly established planning process, the Act identifies seven overarching objectives. The seven objectives are stated as the ability to:

1. provide for the fair, orderly, economic and sustainable use, development and management of land including the protection of natural and man-made resources and the maintenance of ecological processes and genetic diversity;
2. enable land use and development planning and policy to be integrated with environmental, social, cultural, economic, conservation and resource management policies at national, regional, district, village and site specific levels;
3. create an appropriate urban structure and form for the development of the Kingdom so as to provide equitable and orderly access to transportation, recreational, employment and other opportunities;

4. secure a pleasant, efficient and safe working, living and recreational environment for people in the Kingdom;
5. protect public utilities and other assets and enable the orderly provision and co-ordination of public utilities and other facilities for the benefit of the community;
6. balance the present and future interests of all persons; and
7. provide increased opportunity for public participation in planning and assessment.

In achieving the above objectives, Part III of the Act addresses the development of spatial plans and defines a spatial plan as *“a sustainable management plan prepared for any area”*. It then proceeds to address the structure and content of spatial plans as well as the Agency’s obligation to notify the public when any plan is being prepared. In doing so, the Act establishes a hierarchy of plans in the order of national plans, regional plans, district plans, village plans and then site-specific plans. This hierarchy is portrayed in figure * below:

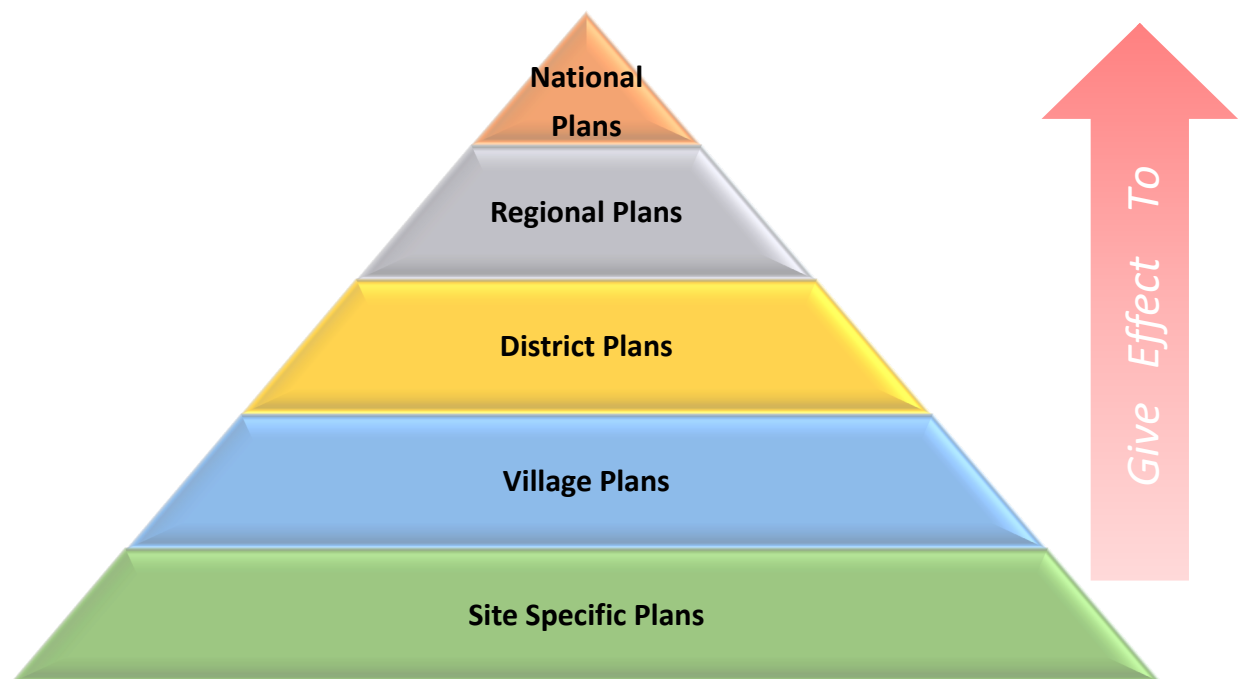


Figure 11: Planning Document Hierarchy

As depicted in Figure 11 above, lower level plans must give effect to and be consistent with all plans that sit at higher levels of the hierarchy.

The Development Assessment Process

The key outcome of the Act however, is the planning and development assessment process outlined in Part IV of the Act. In this Part, the Act requires that every development must first obtain a development consent from the Agency before any work can be undertaken. Development applications must be submitted to the Agency, after which a development consent is granted if the Agency deems that the application fulfils the development criteria specified in the Act. An Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) must also be submitted with every development application and the Act also specifies a range of conditions that the Authority may attach to a development consent.

Furthermore, the Act also grants the Authority the right to issue what are effectively, cease and dismiss orders to land owners or occupiers that are deemed to be undermining the 'amenity of an area or place'. The amenity of an area or place is said to be determined by a series of specified features which include excessive noise, excessive dust and offensive signage, material or structures.

The Strengths of the Act

The particularly severe enforcement provisions of the Act which are outlined in Part VI are said to be a strength that the Act possesses over the other environmental legislation (Key Informant Nine). The monetary fine is capped at \$100,000 with even the possibility of imprisonment of up to 10 years depending on the gravity of the offence. If the offence continues, offenders can be fined a maximum of \$500 per day till the offence ceases. K9, from the Ministry of Lands, Survey and Natural Resources commented on the Act's unique enforcement provisions and acknowledged that a more proactive approach would be preferred.

"We have been able to use a powerful tool that the other planning related authorities don't have, which the Planning Act has and that is the Stop Work Order. We've been issuing a few but that's a reactive approach, it's not proactive, planning tools are supposed to be there to plan. When we've spoken to the other Ministries, we're the one Ministry that has that. So, we have a stronger enforcement tool than others, but that's because our Act was later in time. The Building Code,

building standards, EIA were all before. As you'll see, it also has a very strong penalty, imprisonment and/or a fine and the fine is very high. Different for individuals, different for corporates." K9

The Act is without a doubt incredibly far-reaching and employs an extensive scope which encompasses all areas of planning in Tonga. As Key Informant One put it, the Act is an "umbrella Act". K1 also described it as being an:

"...accountable, transparent system where the investor or the client can see how, where the application is at, who's processing it and what is needed." K1

Inherent from its extensive consultation phases when it was first being developed, the Act has a particularly strong emphasis on consultation for both the development of new plans and before new development projects commence. Tukua Tonga, Director of PUMA and Rosamond Bing, CEO for the Ministry of Lands, Survey and Natural Resources (MLSNR) elaborated on this strength of the Act. Rosamond also pointed out that the act of consultation is intrinsic to the Tongan culture and thus, the Act also incorporates deeply rooted Tongan values in this way.

"...it came in parallel to what was happening in government with the political change. The Act itself is a vehicle for the democratic process, all projects need consultation. This never existed before and after 10 years of consultation, that's the most widely consulted Act in Tonga." Tukua Tonga

"Consultation is one of the very strong elements of the Planning Act. It requires consultation by the planning authorities with relevant authorities and with the people in terms of projects that affect their lives. So, I think to some extent, that's where some of the traditional and cultural aspects fit in with consultation. It has been done in the way that it is appreciated locally and traditionally. Planning process has to fit within our cultural norms." Rosamond Bing

Issues with the Act

Whilst many key informants acknowledged the incredible promise that the Act has, a number of other key enforcement agents outside of PUMA were sceptical about the value of the Act. Key Informants Seven and Eight voiced concerns regarding the overlap that

the Act has with other relevant legislation such as the EIA Act and the duplication of roles and responsibilities currently being undertaken by other government bodies.

“Success has not been as strong as it could have been and that’s because we developed and passed the Spatial Planning Act and tried to integrate it into a system that was already embedded. So in the development process for example, if you’re building a house, it goes first to Infrastructure for the permit and then it goes to Health, Fire Services, Environment then the last point of call is our Ministry. So that system was already in place. So having to suggest the process be reversed or changed didn’t quite sit well and we’re still in the process of doing that. I think the administration of the Act itself, is still in its teething stage, so to speak. So it was passed in 2012 and it only brought into force some of the provisions. It didn’t bring into force the meaty parts of it, that came later on maybe two or three years later. So we are now just in year two of trying to get it up and that requires resources and commitment from Government.” K9

“The idea is that PUMA would be an independent agency, but it still sits as a division under the Ministry of Lands. So we’ve even had PUMA move to Infrastructure and those are attempts to see how we integrate Spatial Planning into the existing process. Because what we’re saying is, well if you’re having any sort of development as defined by the Act, it should get a development consent first and then journey the other way round, so it’s still a bit of a work in progress. But I think the most important thing is that there is a legal framework there and people understand. It’s just taking a bit of time to embed where it will fit in ‘cos that system was already in place, which they were part of, but because they were the tail end.” K9

“I think if it was a process within the process, it would have been alright. But trying to say, yeah sorry we’re not on the tail end now, we should be at the beginning hasn’t quite received as much support.” K9

“If you look at the Act, there is a sort of repeating of what we (EIA Office) are doing here when we do our assessments. Their Act is to do with the spatial, space in area and for us when we do the assessment, it is already set out in our guidelines. I had a meeting with Tukua and then I said, ‘What is the purpose of your Bill? Because we have already done this.’” K7

“There is a lot of overlapping responsibilities. When the NSPM Act was being discussed, we thought there was a lot of duplication of what we (EIA Office) were already doing and what other ministries were doing. I understand what they were trying to develop, like a one-stop shop where they give the development consent, and it would’ve been easier probably from the customer’s view to deal with

only one ministry, but it did bring up a lot of duplication and sometimes it's hard because the communication within ourselves in government isn't always good." K8

Another issue that Key Informants identified was the lack of acceptance of the Act both within the Ministry of Lands Survey and Natural Resources itself and across the other relevant Ministries.

"...the purpose of the planning tool is good and there are some people know how to use it and implement it. However, for its actual implementation, there hasn't been much of it. I think there are numerous reasons behind that but one of the main reasons is that it's not being recognised by ministries and organisations. Because to me there hasn't been any consultation or capacity building to other ministries like, 'Look guys, here's a planning tool that we can all use, it will help us plan for the development of Tonga.' That has been missing. So far it's only the few people who are within PUMA that know about it...." K11

"Though, I think they accept the Act and the planning process, I feel like it's still not supported. Because there hasn't been any improvement." K11

"I must say it's been a challenge, the people that's accepted; the King, hierarchy and all, they expect it to be implemented, but we have a real problem within the Ministry, the acceptance of the Act. That's the challenge now, is acceptancy of the new framework." K1

The lack of regulations to supplement and carry out the work dictated by the Act was also highlighted as an issue by K7. Key Informant Nine also explained that the absence of regulations under the Act was a particular hindrance as the NSPAO could not charge fees without the regulations.

"They need to have the regulation because regulation is a working tool for them." K7

"They drafted the Act so they can charge fees. Charges have to be passed under regulation and under the Tongan system, the regulation has to go back to Parliament. It's a very long process, the Act could have been drafted to say; 'The planning authority shall have the power to impose the fees and charges.' But that's the way they draft here in Tonga, it's not uncommon; 'Oh, we'll have the principle Act and it will say all of the legal stuff but all of the operational stuff will go to a regulation'. And then they never draft the regulations pea toki tali ai pe (and then you just wait). So, one of the things

that's holding them back is they can't charge fees and charges. So, where they want to be in five years' time will depend on where they can get funding."

However, in terms of the implementation capability of the Act, K1 on the other hand did not think that the regulations were integral to that.

"You don't really need the regulations at the moment, it's under the Act, spelt out there black and white. Some will apply, some won't apply, it's a starting point for us." K1

Whilst supportive of the Act, K5 cautioned that in order to stay relevant, it must be tightly monitored and reviewed constantly so that it captures the changes in population and development patterns.

"It is good but like any new piece of legislation, it has to be monitored and it has to be amended. Legislation of such nature need to be reviewed regularly because a) it's new and b) because we're dealing with quite mobile populations and the development is different." K5

K9 was also hesitant about the success of the Act, noting that since its enactment, it has not been able to fulfil all that it set out to accomplish. However, as K9 stated, the Act has provided the framework that was needed.

"So, the Riots did give us the opportunity to fast track the Act, but how successful the Act was, is a different story. Because if you read some reports, the journey through trying to set up a Nuku'alofa development council I think they called it, its success is questionable, but at least there was a framework to move from." K9

Environmental Management Act 2010

The Environmental Management Act 2010 was passed in order to formally establish the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change which existed prior to its enactment. It is important to briefly take note of this Act as its scope covers areas which are central to planning. Furthermore, the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change are one of the key ministries which jointly oversees and manages urban development. The function of the Ministry is to ensure the protection and proper management of the Environment and the promotion of sustainable development (Environmental Act, 2010). 'Environment' is

defined in the Act as *“all natural and physical resources, the ecology, people and culture of the Kingdom, and the social and economic relationships that exist between these elements”*. Whilst no definition is given for physical resources, natural resources is defined as *“land, soil, minerals, water, air and all plants and animals and their habitat, whether native to the Kingdom or introduced”*. The Act stipulates that it is the legislative framework which coordinates the role of Government in relation to all environmental management and decision-making processes. Within the Act, there is also a strong focus on climate change and building climate resilience. In 2016, Environment Management Regulations were established under the Act for the purpose of regulating litter and waste.

Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Regulations 2010

As examined in the previous chapter, the EIA Act was passed in 2003 yet lay dormant in the absence of regulations to enforce it. This section addresses the passing of the Regulations in 2010 and what this meant in terms of the acknowledgement of the EIA Act. It is important to take note of this as Environmental Impact Assessment and planning are very much intertwined, thus, it is counterintuitive to consider the planning process without also considering the EIA process. As K8 expressed, the EIA Regulations finally carried the EIA Act from theory into practice. It introduced a tangible framework that could be carried out and established the EIA Unit under the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change to administer the Regulations.

“When Ma’afu became our Minister in 2009, he got things moving quickly, so the EIA Regulations 2010 were finally gazetted which prescribed the forms and procedures to enforce the Act and the EIA Unit was also established when the Regulations were enacted.” K8

The primary purpose of the Regulations is to set out the EIA process, which it does in Part II. Part II of the Regulations starts with the declaration that the EIA process applies to all projects deemed ‘major projects’ specified under Part III of the EIA Act. However, the Minister must first be notified of all proposed developments before it is determined whether a development project is major or minor. To notify the Minister, the applicant must first complete Form One which is included under Schedule One of the Regulations.

If the applicant does not receive a response after 30 days, the applicant can assume that the application is granted and work may commence. If after the initial screening, the EIA Unit deems the project to be a 'minor project', the applicant must then complete Form Two, after which work is allowed to commence after it is signed off by the Director on behalf of the Minister. If the development is deemed 'major', an Environmental Impact Assessment must be carried out, the content and structure of which are outlined in Form Three. In detailing what to cover in an EIA, Form Three is incredibly detailed and easy to follow. Some of the more vague requirements are also supplemented by questions so that it is evident what information the authority requires. For instance, in terms of the 'purpose' of the proposed development activity, applicants are asked to consider the questions 'What goals and objectives of society are served?' and 'Why is the project needed?' when preparing their EIA. All the forms are provided under Schedule One of the Regulations and included in the appendices of this thesis. The fees and charges to be paid to the EIA Unit are then specified in Schedule Two.

Plans

Sustainable Urban and Environmental Management (SUEM) Project

Nukualofa Structure Plan June 2012

The Sustainable Urban and Environmental Management (SUEM) Project ran from 2010 to 2012 and was funded by the European Union (EU). The purpose of the Project was to build capacity within PUMA in terms of urban planning and its responsibilities with respect to transportation, environment and climate change and Geographic Information Systems (GIS) in particular. In terms of the geographical scope of the Project, the focus was on the Nuku'alofa Greater Urban Area (NGUA). The NGUA covered five sub-areas and spanned 13 villages (kolo). The sub-areas and villages are presented in Table 5 below.

Table 5: Nuku'alofa Greater Urban Area

Sub-Area	Village/ Kolo Number	Village/ Kolo Name
Central	1	Central
	2	Fanga
West	3	Kolomotu'a
	4	Sopu
	5	Longolongo
South	6	Haveluloto
	7	Tofoa
East	8	Kolofo'ou
	9	Ma'ufanga
	10	Popua
	11	Nukunukumotu
Lagoon	12	Lagoon West
	13	Lagoon East

Figure 12 below shows the site boundary for the entire NGUA and Figure 13 shows the specific boundaries of the 13 villages which comprise the NGUA.



Figure 12: The Nuku'alofa Greater Urban Area (NGUA): Sub-Areas Study Site Boundary.Sourced from: **SUEM Framework Document (PUMA, 2012).**



Figure 13: The Nuku'alofa Greater Urban Area (NGUA): Villages (Kolo).

Sourced from: SUEM Framework Document (PUMA, 2012).

The key outcome of the Project was the completion of a 20-year Structure Plan for Nuku'alofa which provided guidelines, strategies and proposed actions for future planning in the GUA. It is important to acknowledge this project because as Key Informants One and 11 stated below, the SUEM Project was key in laying the foundation for planning in Tonga and was the first planning tool delivered under the NSPM Act.

"SUEM was the first tool we had to do under the Planning Act. We had to do a Structural Plan of Nuku'alofa, for which we did a stock take physically of all of Nuku'alofa and the possibilities of addressing some of these problems and we presented that to the King in December 2012. His Majesty was very happy with it, he'd never seen anything like it. You know you can say things but not actually have the evidence to back it up, SUEM gave us that evidence, but we need to do that again I think in 2020. Every 10 years we have to do it because it actually points us a way forward to where we're going. It has a database, it can be legitimised and quantified and that's what the Act gives us." K1

"SUEM really enhanced the planning process because it not only taught us, the current staff at the time how to carry out urban planning activities, but it also assisted in finalising the work on that National Spatial Planning Management Act. So that really helped you know? That was like setting up the baseline." K11

“SUEM also involved a lot of procurement of equipment like computers, GIS software, furniture for the office, ‘cos it was pretty much just the room and a few people inside.” K11

The Framework

The first step to SUEM was to identify the primary urban planning issues in Tonga so that the Structure Plan could then consider how to ameliorate those issues. These issues were compiled in a document titled the ‘Framework’. The Framework identified six key planning issues that Tonga was facing at the time. They are:

1. environmental parameters (cyclone/flooding, tsunami risk, contour conditions);
2. prevailing land laws (Land Act);
3. existing use of land (urban located plantation land);
4. road infrastructure (limiting original system);
5. surface drainage (extreme drainage deficiencies);
6. utilities deficiencies (urban septic tank system/water supply options).

Each of the issues were thoroughly investigated and reported on in the Framework document. Also included in the Framework, were the results from the extensive consultation that was carried out across the 13 villages (kolo) of the GUA. Whilst the Structure Plan had the most practical value, the Framework itself painted a picture of the GUA’s current state at a holistic and visual level that had not previously existed and thus, highlighted what needed to be done. This is further reinforced by K1 who stated that:

“The SUEM framework brought into life where things are, the current status where the houses are, how many houses are using portable toilets, how many houses are outside how many houses are inside, you can get an idea of where things are.” K1

The Nuku’alofa 20-Year Structure Plan

The overall objective for the 20-Year Structure Plan was to build capacity for long term urban planning and environmental protection in the GUA of Nuku’alofa. In considering the six key planning issues that were identified in the Framework as well as the objectives identified by the local communities in the GUA, the Plan formulated a series of strategies,

guidelines and development controls. The strategies outlined in Section 2.1 of the Plan addressed the objectives which resulted from the community consultations and proposed methods which covered environment and land management, accessibility, the development of new infrastructure and public amenities across all the relevant villages. In terms of the guidelines, fourteen guideline categories were identified:

1. Public Environment
2. Micro-Climate
3. Conservation of Local Heritage
4. Urban Design and Character
5. Desired and Promoted Uses
6. Expansion of Existing Use
7. Change of Existing Use
8. Access and Safety
9. Public Parking of Vehicles
10. Building Height and Siting
11. Privacy
12. Use of Building Materials
13. Energy Efficiency
14. Pollution Control

The purpose of the guidelines was to inform the rules and regulations that would be set out in the development controls. Each of the 14 guidelines were discussed in terms of what the preferred outcome would be for each of them in the event of any development. For instance, the micro-climate guideline stated that development would need to be designed and sited in a way which minimised any detrimental micro-climate impact such as the effects of wind, temperature, sunlight, glare or shadow on any adjacent land or buildings. The guidelines also addressed the preservation of culture through the built space in guideline number three which stated that any building or place identified to be of cultural heritage significance would have to be retained, unless the structural soundness and condition of the building presented a risk to public safety. It also stated that the development controls should also encourage new buildings and extensions to employ designs both visually and functionally compatible with the Tongan culture. Across all the plans and government reports examined throughout this research, this is the first to identify culture in the built space as a priority. Maintaining heritage through

the built environment and showcasing culture in the built space was particularly important to Leveni Aho, an architect by trade and a former CEO of the Ministry of Infrastructure. As Leveni stated, features of the built environment such as buildings are windows into the past and mean so much more than the structural functions that they provide. However, as Leveni expressed below, this is not a priority in Tonga and much of the built environment from the past has been left to wither away with time.

"They are a contribution to the past and I think there is a lot we can do instead of just tearing things apart, we need to show respect, keep some of it at least. The more we look into the past, the more we can look into the future. It is important, but unfortunately for us here in Tonga, only a very few of us value this..."

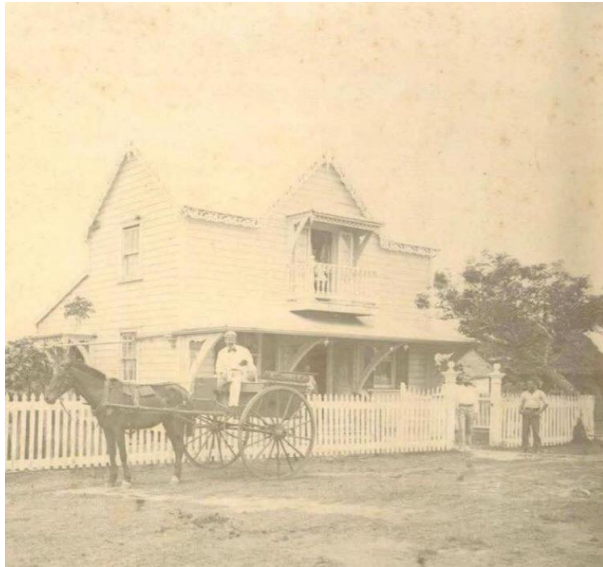
"There's also that mindset or attitude that we have, we don't fix things until they fall apart."

"There's a building by Hafoka where the British High Commission used to be. Those buildings were 1880s, almost a hundred and forty years! They need to be maintained, not only maintained but they need to be documented, but we don't have enough scholars to do that. There's a whole lot you can learn about architecture in Nuku'alofa and its related from family to family. For example, the Cockers, the early settlers, the British. They were influential in the development of Nuku'alofa. It's good to have that information."

"This is why I like this place although there's been a lot of change but at least they have the initiative to maintain the character and it's become a little focal point in town. But when you people return I think that we need to develop an organization, an informal one to generate interest in this area, so the town planners should also be looking into that."

The place that Leveni Aho is referring to above is Friends Café located in central Nuku'alofa. Pictures of the Café are provided below. In 2017, Friends Café acquired and extended into the white house in the corner shown in Figure 15. Before 2017, it only occupied the smaller one story building next to the newly acquired house. The original Friends Café building can be seen to the right of Figure 15. The house in Figure 14 is the same house as it existed in the late 1800s. It is believed to be the first Western-style building built in Nuku'alofa between 1860 and 1880 by Henry Harry Percival, one of the first British settlers in Nuku'alofa. As portrayed by both figures and as Leveni stated, the

Café owners chose to preserve the original façade of the building. The interior of that part of the Café has also been left reasonably untouched in terms of its character and original ambience. An image of the interior of the Café is provided in Figure 16 below.



Friends Café in Nuku'alofa.

Figure14: The building in the late 1800s.

Figure15: Friends Café, current day .



Figure 16: Interior of Friends Café – Current Day

In terms of traditional architecture, Leveni shared his experience from when he designed the current building for his Church, the Siasi Konisitutone Tau'atina o Tonga (Free Constitution Church of Tonga) in the form of a traditional Tongan fale, the fale-Fakamanuka (Leveni Aho, 2019; Ilaiu, 2009). As a long-time advocate for representing culture in our built spaces, this is his legacy.

"I come up with this little church. That was my best attempt to reflect on the past but using modern days. We didn't have the column and the post, we had a laminated beam. We used modern technology to achieve the form. But that's a way of reflecting. We cannot be totally traditional, it's just like a tribute to what was old. Well that's my contribution to traditional architecture, best I can do." Leveni Aho

Images of the Church designed by Leveni Aho are shared below in Figures 17 and 18.



Figure 17: Outside of Church



Figure 18: Inside of Church

The Development Controls were addressed in Section 2.3 of the Plan, with the purpose to regulate and manage development across and within all land and marine areas of the NGUA. It also declared that it would bypass and replace any other regulations which covered land within the NGUA that was previously enacted. The Development Controls were based on three sections; sub-area plans, special development areas and the written regulations which refer to the entirety of the Development Controls document. The Development Controls are the most prescriptive part of the Structure Plan. It defines rules pertaining to each of the identified planning areas and declares that it establishes a

framework for planning applications to be assessed against by PUMA and draws legal authority from the NSPM Act. The Sub-Area Plans specified the land-use activities that were permitted on land within the NGUA and identified any special areas where specific regulations or design guidelines would apply. Permitted land-use within the NGUA included residential land use, mixed commercial and residential use in the central area as well as industrial use. The Special Development Areas (SDA) Section then identified five areas within the NGUA that were designated for a specific use. These five Special Development Areas (SDA) are listed out below:

1. Central Area and Tourism Precinct
2. New Housing Neighbourhoods
3. New Government Enclave
4. The Lagoon Frontage
5. Conservation and Limited Use Reserves

The special conditions which applied to them were then set out in great detail. For instance, for the area designated as Central and Tourism Precinct, the plot size, frontage, coverage, ratio, building height and setbacks from boundaries all had specific measurement requirements. In terms of the plot ratio, it was limited to a maximum of 180%. The reason for this was to contain the potential adverse impacts such as heightened traffic problems and parking needs which often accompanies increased levels of commercial activity or residential density. The illustration in Figure 19 was also provided to visualise this requirement and this level of detail is consistent throughout the rest of the SDA Section.

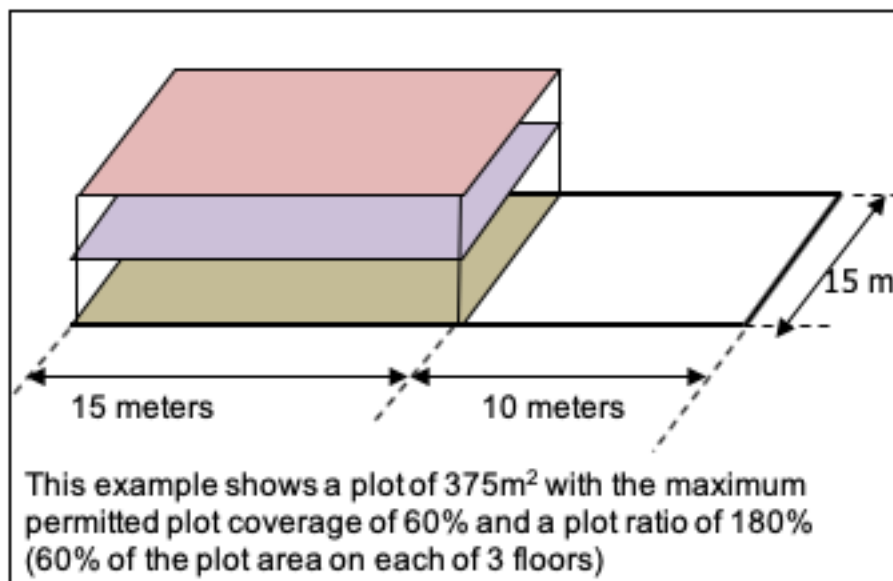


Figure 19: Excerpt from SUEM Plan for plot ratio. :

Overall, the 20-Year Structure Plan developed through SUEM and published in 2012 provided a very detailed planning framework for Tonga which encompassed all aspects of planning. However, as K11 states below, whilst the Project produced an abundance of crucial information, the momentum came to a halt after the Project was concluded.

“The SUEM Project did a lot of work on helping out with the development of Nuku’alofa, but there haven’t been any improvements since on the planning process itself.” K1

“SUEM did a lot of work in helping out with the development of Nuku’alofa but there haven’t been any improvements since on the planning process itself, I don’t feel there is acceptance yet of the framework or the Act by many organisations or Ministries.” K11

Other Plans

Since the seemingly overnight acknowledgement of planning and its subsequent development after the event of the Riots, an overwhelming number of plans covering a range of different planning issues have been developed. Though it has been more than a decade since the Riots and the establishment of a single planning authority through the National Spatial Planning Authority Office and PUMA, K11 explains that Tonga is still experiencing the early symptoms from when a country experiences a significant and impactful change to its usual institutional arrangements. In Tonga’s case, numerous suggestions have been adopted from both local and international experts, as key enforcement agents experiment and seek out solutions that fulfil the needs of the country.

“Tonga is in a very critical point at this time. Some people like to call it, ‘transition’ period where there’s a lot of projects, a lot of frameworks being introduced, a lot of different recommendation and these are both local experts and also frameworks introduced by foreigners who were contacted as consultants or experts to help out, so there are so many...” K11

Since 2006, the plans developed in Tonga have had a particular focus on elements of the natural environment. For instance, such plans include the Joint National Action Plan on Climate Change and Disaster Risk Management which covers the need for climate

resilience in the built space developed by MEIDECC (Ministry of Environment). There are also numerous flood management plans for different areas and from different projects such as the Nuku'alofa Flood Management Master Plan from the Tonga Integrated Urban Resilience Sector Project (TIURSP). In 2015, the Government also commenced work on a Marine Spatial Plan (MSP) for Tonga under MEIDECC (Ministry of Environment) which seeks to protect Tonga's marine resources from human activities such as over-fishing. A number of villages in Tonga also have Village Plans which outline their values and desired development directions. These village plans are housed under the Ministry of Internal Affairs due to their oversight of the village town officers. Town officers are elected officials who represent the interests of their villages in all aspects of the life of the town and in the realm of district, regional and national politics. While this is by no means,

Challenges to Implementing Effective Planning Processes

This section outlines the issues that key enforcement agents identified as being significant barriers to carrying out their work effectively and establishing planning processes in Tonga. As K8 and K11 stated, the planning process and planning frameworks have been put in place and the issue is now the implementation of those processes.

"When these tools came in what happens is, us in Government when we are implementing it, there's a lot of challenges in actually complying with what the law is saying." K8

"I think the tools are there but we're not using them as effectively as we could." K9

"I think the planning process is set. You can call it ineffective or inactive probably. It's there, but it's not being used." K11

"I think it's fair to say that Government's capacity is very amongst an infant stage. It's not matured organisation to be frank, to be highly efficient...in administration of planning. If you drive past around town, there are certain businesses that I don't understand why they get a permit. How they treat their waste, sanitation, these kind of critical public facilities are not accessible in town. Even

just public convenience, there are certain clusters in town where especially for kids they need a restroom that's available and accessible.” K9

The issues that are hindering that implementation, will now be identified and presented below. Across all the key informants, four key issues were highlighted as being particularly inconvenient. Those four issues are the sectorial nature of planning in Tonga, politics, a lack of resources and Tonga’s Land Tenure System. As portrayed in the graph below, most of the key informants identified sectorial planning as a challenge to the implementation of planning process in Tonga. Six key informants identified politics and the lack of resources as a challenge and then four addressed the land tenure system as a barrier. Some key informants identified more than one challenge and this is reflected in the numbers below

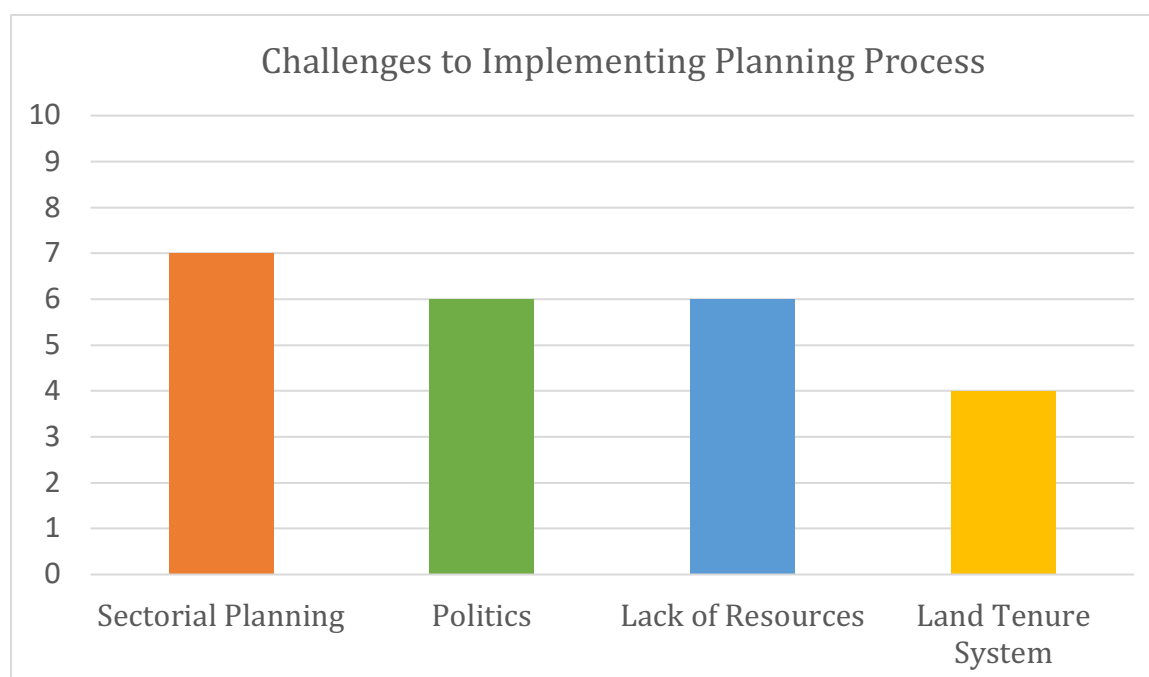


Figure20: Challenges to Implementing Planning Process as identified by Key Informants

Each issue will be examined individually below with the relevant perceptions shared by key informants and in the order set out in Figure 20. It is particularly important to take note of this section as the recommendations set out at the end of this study will be informed by these challenges.

Sectorial Planning

“Which planning process do I use? I don’t feel like this today.” K11

The above quote is taken from discussions with Key Informant 11 and is a representation of the uncertainty and discord that sectorial planning results in. In this sense, sectorial planning refers to a fragmented approach to planning where each government agency or ministry develops their own plans and thus, their own planning processes to abide by. It is the absence of a single and unified planning process under the mandate of a single government agency to which other government agencies and the public alike can adhere to. As discussed by key informants below, employing such an approach has led to a segregation of government and an overall absence of planning.

“I think that the biggest challenge is to overcome the fragmented system we have in place and try to streamline. There needs to be a very strong commitment to addressing the duplication and we’ve started to some extent. I think we’ve made some positive steps forward; we’re consulting more, we’re working together more...but I think we do need to pick up the pace, otherwise development will proceed with no proper plan.” K9

“So even though PUMA is over there as the Land Planning Authority, they still come under the Ministry of Land and Survey, but it has to be clear who has the responsibility. Is it gonna be taken up by PUMA, is it gonna be still under the Ministry of Land and Survey? The Ministry of Land and Survey own everything in there, they register the land. But when it comes to implementation, they have to give it to Minister of Infrastructure to do it. So it’s still unclear now, especially the duties and responsibilities of PUMA with regard to implementation of infrastructure. Now they arguing about what happen to the footpath around in Kolomotu’a at the moment. Who gave the authority for that? They’re already making excuse on that one. But that’s where urban planning has to be clear. I think it will all come back to whatever the appropriate regulation and Act, and from there what is the policy direction given for urban planning.” K12

As K12 stated above, because of the sectorial nature of planning, the relevant government agencies tend to work in silos. As such, the division of labour is difficult to discern and conflicts become unavoidable. It is thus vital that the planning process is well defined and leaves little to interpretation. Photographs of the footpaths in Kolomotu’a which K12

refers to above are presented in Figures 21 and 22. In K12's opinion, clear direction through the appropriate legislative frameworks is essential to solving confusion and of responsibilities.



Figure 21 and Figure 22: Footpath construction in Kolomotu'a.

Excerpts from discussions with K2 and K7 are presented below to highlight the fragmented institutional arrangements within ministries and across ministries with respect to the planning process and how urban management is approached.

"At the moment, we [PUMA] are housed together with the Ministry of Lands and Natural Resources so there are so many departments and the CEO can only do so much... so you know she has to be fair with all the departments and priorities and needs and requirements.." K2

"If they [PUMA] stay focused on the infrastructure development like the drainage but with the drainage it's has to talk with MOI [Ministry of Infrastructure], 'cos MOI has the building code." K7

"There are three government agency who are working together with the assessment to do with urban development. You go through the Ministry of Works and they assess the building code, then you have to come to us and we do the EIA. We look at the social, economic and environment potential. Then from here, we also refer you to PUMA. They look at the spacing, the zoning. They can also look at the land registration. Pe 'oku lesisita e konga pe 'ikai? [Whether the piece of land is registered or not?] So these are the three key agency who are working with the urban development." K7

Another issue with the involvement of a number of different agencies which K9 discussed is that naturally, such a set up would result in a particularly longwinded development

application process. As a consequence, the agencies who receive the application last would be compelled to let it advance without putting it through the proper course of assessment.

“Planning here involves a lot of stakeholders, with a lot of strong vested interests and it’s a really, really big challenge to provide any effective intervention. So, they could just go get their building permits and eventually, we get to the tail end, by then everyone has approved it but us. So, we sort of wonder whether you want to hold back or whether you want to allow the developments to proceed.” K9

Key Informant 11, a former PUMA planner also gives an example of a time when they had to decide between the planning process developed for a previous project in the area or with PUMA’s own planning process.

“One example that I can think of was a Ridge to Reef project that have closed last year. It was implemented under the Environment and it was to look after the Fanga’uta catchment, and to empower the community around the Fanga’uta so they can be responsible to look after their area. So, they established a committee called the Management Committee and in the establishment of this committee they also proposed a process in case there is development around this area and we had to decide whether we go with our planning process that was established within PUMA or we go with the Fanga’uta Management Committee process. If you think of all the other ministries which probably has a project or five projects with different frameworks, you can imagine the mess.” K11

With sectorial planning, K13 cautioned that there is also the consequence that because responsibilities are so widespread, none of the relevant agencies would feel that they have the authority to enforce their duties. As a result, development could then proceed with little to no restraint

“That’s a problem with it being fragmented, because no one’s going to feel like they have enough right to come in and do anything.” K13

Politics

“It’s a political world.” K1

The political climate in Tonga was another issue which key informants identified as a barrier to implementing the planning frameworks that have been developed. Whether it is in government or a private business, the political situation of any country often dictates the direction of all areas and facets of society. As K1 stated above, *“It’s a political world”*. In Tonga’s case and in respect to planning, politics has not often worked in their favour. Key informants below discuss how the political atmosphere across the Government and within the individual government ministries themselves have hindered their efforts to establish an effective planning presence in Tonga.

As staff of the National Spatial Planning Authority Office (NSPAO), Key Informants One and Two felt strongly about politics being a hindrance. As stated below, K1 attributes the delay in establishing the key components needed to get their planning process off the ground to both the internal and external political interferences. This was also supported by K2 who stated that the efforts they put into developing plans and frameworks are futile if planning is not prioritised from the top.

“It’s funny how everybody approves it and they want it done now but it’s that internal bureaucracy within the Ministry (MLSNR) itself and in the Government. That’s a problem because we’re doing major projects for Nukualofa right now and we definitely need the components of the Act (NSPM), we need the tribunal to be established, we need the advisory committee to be established, we need the agency to move away as an independent agency, so no more political interference. We get that a lot! That’s the major issue for us.” K1

“First and foremost politics and I’ve experienced it first-hand, regardless of resources definitely, but the reason why I’m saying politics, is because I don’t think our politicians really grasp what planning is all about, they don’t really understand the processes and the potential of urban planning and unfortunately they are the ones making the decision, so we can make beautiful plans and fancy regulations, but if they don’t really prioritise it or have interest in it, I don’t think these will work here in Tonga.” K2

"It's just politics, because I knew that when I joined PUMA there was a plan, a blueprint and stuff like that but politics played a huge role and somehow things were tweaked in some ways so it didn't go as planned, there are always pros and cons." K2

"I stay on in PUMA because you see the potential that urban planning can have for Tonga if carried out and done properly. It's just that because of the politics and all of these that hinders that." K2

Key Informants Three, Five, Seven and Eight, all either past or present key enforcement agents from across the relevant Ministries, all supported what was said by K1 and K2 above. As K5 states below, political stability has always been an influencing factor due to the nature of planning where projects are often long-term and ongoing. Unfortunately, the lifetime of a single political office does not match the lifetime of these projects and leaves planning operating in an incredibly volatile environment, where projects can be dismissed depending on the preference of the next political office.

"Projects tend to change according to certain governments, political influence and unfortunately the nature of that, no one can do anything on a long-term basis. The next Government come and say forget about what happened the last time, we'll do something else. Because Government are elected for four years and the chances that anyone looking beyond that... But there are a lot of long-term development projects that need to be addressed. To me, the big challenge is having stability in the Government. Once we get that sorted, then the rest of the planning process can fall into place" K5

"There's too many politics and also the coordination between Government and between government agencies. They should be working together with the NGO and the private sectors. The political issue in here, it is affecting everyone." K7

"When applying these tools, there's a lot of resistance, a lot of it I felt was the political challenges, the political influences, that's what restricted us from doing what we wanted to do. Communication was another barrier, communicating from our level to the higher levels, with the hierarchy structure. So, the tools itself, I think if we had done it without those barriers, it would have probably been achieved better." K8

However, K3 below suggests that perhaps, the relevant ministries simply need to sit down together and sort out the internal tension amongst themselves to allow planning efforts to flow efficiently.

“Ministries and sectors that are directly related to urban planning work have not able to put aside their differences and come together seamlessly to work for better use of space with consideration of all the important elements of physical and spatial planning.” K3

The Lack of Resources

The overall lack of resources was identified as the third key challenge to implementing planning processes in Tonga. Resources in this regard refer to financial resources, human resources and natural resources such as the availability of land. Of these resource categories, the shortage of qualified people to get the job done was identified by most key informants as the challenge, followed by the lack of finances and land.

As K3, K5, K6 and K11 state below, it is difficult for PUMA and all the relevant ministries because there simply aren't enough qualified planners to drive change and implement the planning frameworks.

“There is also need to have appropriate and qualified staffs, more think tanks to administer PUMA and its responsibility for the country and especially to tackle the development pressure currently exist in Nuku'alofa.” K3

“We never had the resources, we never had the right people. It's always a resource constraint that delays developments. When you don't have enough resources, you don't have enough skilled people to do it, then it's not a high priority.” K5

“PUMA can say yes we have the authority to do this but when you look at the other hand, do they really have the authority and the capacity to do it? They may have the authority but they don't have the capacity.” K5

“The lack of and limited experienced staff and resources has constrained PUMA from providing effective and efficient urban planning and management services. Capacity development will be required within PUMA to implement and enforce the spatial planning legislation.” K6

“The biggest barrier in my opinion, would be the lack of capacity for the organisation to actually move things. For example, there's very few qualified urban planners here in Tonga, probably less than ten. So to start with you have to have that team that understands what is a planning process,

what's the benefit and then to actually strategize or plan on how to inform the rest of Tonga and all the other ministries that there is a planning process and it can be used by everyone." K11

Key Informants Two and Five then discuss the issues with financial constraints below. In this regard, K2 refers to the limited funds available to compensate land owners if it is necessary to acquire privately owned land for public purposes. Key Informant Five then explained that the Government seldom has the funds to continue maintaining foreign aid funded development projects once they are completed and the donors are no longer involved.

"There is the issue of land, the need for land resettlement and compensation; the Government does not have the resources to do this. If we had the resources I'm sure it wouldn't be a problem because we somehow work with the people and compensate them and tell them look we'll use this land for housing etc...but unfortunately we do not have that." K2

"That's where most of the short falls are in planning because we know it's going to take this much to do it, but who is going to fund it? Sometimes it's good enough, development partners come in and do it but it's not a long term solution because once the partners pull out the project collapse." K5

Key Informants Two and Four then discuss the issue of land availability. According to K2, all land suitable for development has already been allotted, making it difficult to plan for any new developments that could be beneficial. Key Informant Four also addressed the scarcity of land stating that the relevant authorities need to start considering where and how the Nuku'alofa urban area will develop in the near future.

"Somehow all the lands here in Nuku'alofa have been allotted and that is one of the problems that we face here in Tonga compared to other countries, they can do planning because they have the freehold land and things that you plan, have more chances of it happening compared to us here in Tonga, we can't do that because all the lands here are gone." K2

"It's really the land that is the greatest challenge. But I think that's where Government needs to be a little bit more disciplined and decide whether we are going to disperse, like for Nuku'alofa, there's no more space, you can only go up. K4

The Land Tenure System

Tonga's unique Land Tenure System was the final key challenge to implementation identified by the key informants. As discussed in the previous chapter, the Land Tenure System was established through the Land Act 1927 and has its roots in Tonga's Constitution. As the Key Informants discuss below, culturally, Tongans have an almost spiritual bond with their land. Thus, to take away a Tongan person's land, whether for the collective good of society, will always be problematic (Key Informant Two). As such, because of the nature of planning and urban development, the Land Tenure System places limitations on what, where and how authorities can implement their plans.

"...there are barriers and factors that really influence our work and the main reason is our Land Act, our Constitution, for you to go to someone and tell them to give up their land whether it's for the greater good of the community or, it's a bit..., because as Tongans we have that special ties to our land and sentiment to the land, even though some of them go overseas but they have those ties to the land so it's sort of a culture as a Tongan you have to have a piece of land, that's my right, I'm a Tongan and I have land in Tonga so we are still trying to find out ways how to go about it..." K2

"There are obvious constraints to spatial planning because of Tonga's peculiar land tenure system."
K4

"The only other issue would be our unique Land Tenure System. However, I feel like the development of the National Planning Act is already a leeway if people read it properly, 'cos it's already giving the authority for PUMA or the Minister of Lands to decide on a particular piece of land even if it's owned by someone else but then the mindset of people, as soon as you mention land it's already taboo, like it's already no." K11

Key Informant 13, a legal officer in the Ministry of Justice offered a perspective from inside the legal system. As K13 elaborates below, it is clear that the land tenure system makes it challenging for development efforts to progress smoothly. However, the way the legal system is set up, producing legislation which takes away what previous legislation had given will never be acceptable and thus, is not an appropriate solution (Key Informant 13). Nevertheless, by Constitution, all land belongs to the King, thus, the only way that land can be acquired, will be if the King so requests it (Key Informant 13).

“The land tenure system I think is the key challenge because that’s just the norm na’e tupu hake moe kakai Tonga (that Tongan people grew up with) so in addition to it just being the practice I think changing the mindset of people will be hard because we’ve always been used to it, it’s always been this way, ma’u ete konga api (you get a piece of land). But there’s always of course that understanding also that all land belongs to the crown so I don’t know, it’s probably a more politically charged issue where you have royalists who at the end of the day understand that your land ultimately belongs to the king so if the king wants it for this reason then why not, that sort of mentality.” K13

“He ikai pe ke lava o tamate’i pe ke to’o (you will never be able to eliminate or confiscate) registered land, it automatically goes down through the heir, until such a time that they relinquish their rights to it then it goes back to the Government but for as long as there’s an heir, osi iai pe tokotaha ia a’ana (there’s already an owner) and if you try to develop legislation to take away that right that will be a no, no for the courts because you’re developing retrospective laws.” K13

However, K6 chose to remain optimistic stating that there were no challenges.

“At the moment, I cannot think of any challenges. I believe that we will continue to see positive outcomes with the work of PUMA and our Ministry.” K6

Looking to the future

In considering the barriers to implementation that were discussed above, it is now necessary to review the solutions that key informants discussed. Just as the previous section, this section will also be integral to informing the recommendations of this study. In short, this section answers the question: What would an ideal planning system look like in Tonga? The main solution that was suggested by key informants was a merger of all the relevant government divisions and a centralisation of planning responsibility. This section will present the perceptions of key informants as they address the prospect of a merger.

As displayed below, Key Informants One, Two, Four, Eight, Nine and Eleven all support a centralised planning system.

"It needs to be centralised, because if you talk about efficiency and effectiveness of delivering business processes and delivering it to the people, you need to realign it properly, it's just time to do it. Building codes over at Infrastructure, EIA is there, it should be just under one roof under the planning authority" K1

"I think if we were to be independent as how it was suggested, then fingers crossed things might be different because we'll just work with the authority and then things will just flow, work will flow." K2

"You need to align the land use with town planning, all the municipal services need to be aligned." K4

"With this whole development consent, I think the only way it would work is if they became an independent body. I don't know if they're independent because they were under lands then they were under infrastructure and I don't know where they sit. But if they really want to be that sort of central role I think they should be an independent body, they should also have someone working within them like an EIA person and not be so authoritative, but also inclusive of other ministries." K8

"What I would like to see in the future is I would like to see it fully independent when it is up and running and able to move out, but you see they rely on Government for funding; salaries are paid, operational costs are paid. Until such time as they are able to issue their own fees and charges and be financially sustainable, there is not much they can do." K9

"I would like to see PUMA independent, 'cos I think it will allow them to grow. My view is that PUMA is not growing within the Government structure. Right now, it is still treated as a Government entity because it still remains a Government entity. It is a Minister who is the Planning Authority, their budget, everything's still taken from the public purse. But I think if they were to be as effective as they could, they should become fully independent and self-sufficient." K9

"It will help with the coordination of ministries if everyone uses the same planning process. To me, it's doable. I don't think anything is impossible, if you have a good plan and you actually do the work, because if people are easy to accept new frameworks that's proposed by foreigners and it's the first time then why not?" K11

"We need that one framework that everyone can use and get things organised, and I see that that's the place for the current urban planning process that the National Spatial Planning have, it's just a matter of implementing it." K11

"Planning process before and after the Riots is still artificial. The only process appears today is PUMA involvement with assessing building permits but theirs is more work to do than this only. The weight of enforcing of compliance is still with MoI, which should NOT be the case. Responsibility should shared across to PUMA to ensure full on compliances are followed." K3

"Ideally being centralised would be great but looking at the practicality of it, it will be good but if we start with a small department and gradually build it up until 10 years down the line it will develop into its own authority though still a government body, because Tonga definitely can't finance just like that, I don't think it's realistic, we have to start somewhere small." K2

"My experience on the ocean side of things, having an independent one would work, ideally in terms of coordinating the efforts but of course we know that 'oku limited 'a e resources 'a Tongani (Tonga's resources are limited), whether that will work we don't know, probably can't just start off with this ideal one that we want, it will have to be like a gradual process." K13

"Here in Tonga it's management. It can be done, it's just a matter of changing some of the thinking."
K1

Conclusion

The development of planning since the 2006 Riots has been characterised by a plethora of challenges. PUMA was formally established, yet to this day, still struggle to validate themselves in the wider Government scene. The Riots were instrumental in setting up PUMA and highlighting the value of planning, however, the task at hand is ensuring the implementation of the planning processes establishing. Above all, there needs to be order established in terms of the institutional arrangement to ensure clarity with regards to planning responsibilities and the division of labour.

Discussion

Introduction

This chapter weaves together the two strands of information presented in Chapters Two and Three to offer a holistic representation of what this research means for planning in Tonga and more specifically, how it addresses the three research questions identified in Chapter One. The research questions will be answered through three overarching themes that were identified from the research findings. Those three themes are politics, culture and holistic planning. The first section addresses politics and the vital role that it has played in the development of planning in Tonga. It also discusses what can be done to overcome the negative impacts of politics. The second section looks at the strong hold that culture has on planning in the Tongan context and the difficulty to balance Tongan cultural values and development aspirations through the standard planning model. The third theme of holistic planning is then discussed in the final section, which assesses the current planning practice against a proposed model for planning in Tonga. Throughout the discussion, experiences from the wider Pacific Region presented in the literature review are brought in to contextualise and strengthen the analysis.

Politics and Planning in Tonga

In order to understand why the development of planning in Tonga since the 2006 Riots has been erratic and for the most part, abstract, it is important to understand the critical role that politics plays. Politics in this sense, includes both the processes and agendas driven by elected members of parliament who as a collective, govern the country, as well as the internal bureaucracies that exist within individual government ministries, and amongst colleagues. Both are exceptionally powerful influences in dictating the success or failure of a national goal. This is no different from any other country or organisation. Political support can either make an idea or render it useless. In fact, as explained in

Chapters Two and Three, planning is also a deeply political field in the sense that it is a “vehicle” for democratic processes through its element of community consultation (Key Informant 1). Its very existence in Tonga is by virtue of a highly political event, and as explained in Chapter One, was the same event which validated democracy in Tonga. Though, the usual response to an event resulting in such large-scale damages occurring at once, tends to be the dismissal of planning processes and its democratic measures, this is not what happened in Tonga. In fact, the incident facilitated the acceptance of the first national planning framework and brought visibility to the discipline, securing planning within the national agenda. Thus, though the Riots were a horrific event, it had largely positive implications for planning.

However, politics has also been key in restricting its further growth since the establishment of the National Spatial Planning Authority (NSPA), a situation which is mirrored across the Pacific in many other Pacific Island countries (Jones, 2016; Connell, 2017; Storey and Hunter, 2010). Unfortunately, politics is not a transitory issue which is easily solved, nor is it possible to proceed without political support. As Jones (2016) and Connell (2017) explained, due to the high-level space that planning operates in where planning decisions affect everyone and have policy implications at the international, national and local level, approval is needed from the highest level. In Tonga, this includes the members of parliament and the Monarch. Though the Monarch is allowed a high degree of autonomy, rarely is this ever applied and even less so, after the monumental constitutional reform which took place after the Riots. Thus, though governance of the country in a sense, became more inclusive, it also extended the decision-making process and has prolonged the establishment of many key aspects of the Planning Act (NSPM). Because democratic processes are relatively new to Tonga, the country also had to take time to adjust to the new regimen. Unfortunately, the switch to democracy was such a substantial change that it overshadowed the introduction of the new planning framework. Effectively, people were preoccupied with adjusting to the constitutional reform and could not afford to be concerned with additional changes which seemed trivial when attempting to grow accustomed to an entirely new governance structure.

Unfortunately, no issue exists in isolation. The lack of political support is connected to a range of other issues, from the resourcing issue to the institutional arrangement and thus,

the actual implementation of the planning process, all these challenges are influenced by the political climate. As Jones (2016) and Connell (2017) explained, the government in power decides the very structure of the public service and the processes behind the scene amongst members of parliament and other influential persons, dictate where resources are directed and in what amounts. As explained by key informants, PUMA itself has experienced several impediments as a result of this process, from being reallocated from one ministry to the next, to insufficient budget allocation and thus, not enough staff to accomplish their goals in the time required. Though several key informants doubt the value that PUMA offers in the wider scheme of national development, the instability that PUMA has been dealt by the volatile political environment makes it difficult for them to establish the feeling of permanence which they need in order to focus.

A visual representation of the issues related to planning are also provided in Figure 20 below, which was presented in Results 2. As portrayed in the Graph, the top three challenges to implementing planning processes, as identified by key informants, are sectorial planning, politics and the shortage of resources. Politics is central to the other two challenges because in order to not disrupt the existing power structure, the National Spatial Planning Authority (NSPA) was not afforded its independence as intended (Key Informant 9). Thus, the fragmented planning approach was allowed to continue and the NSPA was simply imbedded into the existing process. Being the newest arrival and demanding to lead the process, as expected, the NSPA was and continues to be met with conflict. As K9 expressed, it is inherently difficult for multiple stakeholders in key positions to reach consensus, especially when many of them have held those positions of authority for a long time. Key Informant 9's concerns also resonate with Jones (2016) and Connell's (2017) findings which highlighted that Pacific urban history proves that such a fragmented approach seldom yields effective results in terms of managing urban growth and its associated impacts. As presented in Chapter Three, Samoa picked up on this and developed a more integrated approach to planning which has been successful despite its challenges. Many of the Tongan planning practitioners share the vision of an independent planning agency, stating that it is difficult to enact any real change in the absence of a centralised system and some level of autonomy. Jones (2017) and Connell (2017) also emphasise that effective planning outcomes cannot be reached, if the relevant agency is not afforded the room to carry out their responsibilities without interference. Similarly,

numerous foreign aid projects have highlighted the need for an integrated planning approach. Thus, the fact that the current fragmented planning system continues to prevail, is not for lack of awareness. Planning practitioners and other key enforcement agents know what will work, the issue is the lack of support from the political figures in power and the absence of a champion to advocate for their recognition.

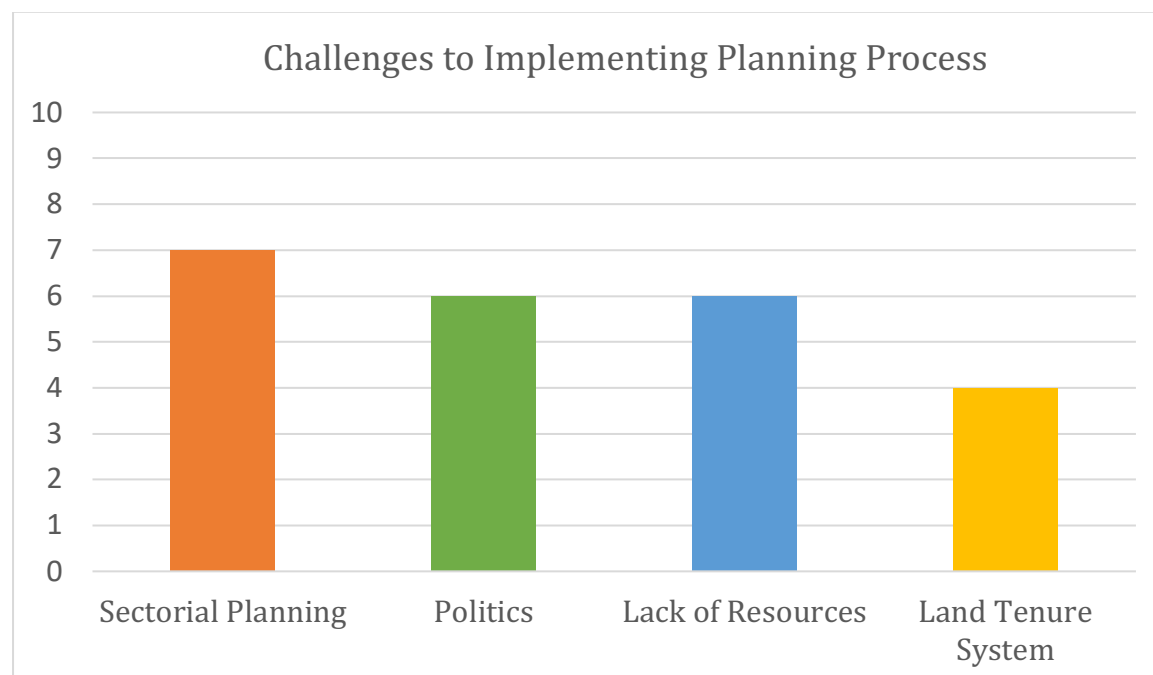


Figure 20: Challenges to Implementing Planning Process as identified by Key Informants

However, the political situation itself is not fixed and support depends on the administration in power. Any support that may be given is short term as the next rotation of political office four years after could potentially result in a new administration that do not see the value in planning. Unfortunately, planning in its nature is characterised by long term projects which require sustained support. It is often the case that within the lifespan of a planning project, two or three administrations might have changed over, which many key informants identified as a significant obstacle in accomplishing long term development goals. The varying nature of political office is also a constraint experienced by the NSPA equivalent in Samoa and many other Pacific Island countries. However, in addition to the fluctuating nature of politics which is common across most countries, Tonga was and still is experiencing a complete restructuring of its political system.

In terms of the internal bureaucracies, prior to the Riots, planning practice was carried out by a number of key government ministries. Thus, the addition of a new planning agency was understandably met with tension as it entailed the loss of previous positions of power by proposing the assembling of the separate divisions under one authority. Though centralisation has not taken place, tensions are omnipresent as the various stakeholders attempt to entangle the web of overlapping responsibilities in their mandates. These internal conflicts are just as problematic as the lack of support from higher authority figures and was both stated and implicit in the comments made by key informants. Key informants from outside of PUMA expressed that they were unsure of what PUMA's purpose was and why they carried out tasks which they already had authority over. As K13 explained, if everyone involved were to set their differences aside and focus on the common goal, perhaps the fragmentation and political instability would not be the issue that it is. However, as Jones (2016) and Connell (2017) discussed, a show of unity amongst competing government ministries or agencies is difficult to achieve.

Given that authority figures with highly vested interests tend to approach open dialogue on such issues with reluctance, Jones and Lea (2016) state that education is imperative when introducing a new regime in Pacific countries, especially when it challenges a system that was previously in place for a long period of time. Just like Tonga, many Pacific Island countries are still trying to make sense of what planning is and why it is important. With a small number of Pacific planning practitioners and an estimated ten in Tonga as K11 and K2 discussed, the higher political authorities justifiably do not know or understand the value of planning. There is a definitive need for education in Tonga and across the Pacific, as it is much a case of fearing what they do not understand. Validation within the Government was also an issue that Samoa's PUMA dealt with in the face of inconstant political support and coming up against a previous system that dealt with planning issues which had been long established and was well respected. In order to overcome this, they carried out an intensive educational campaign across the Government and the general public. However, instead of raising awareness by telling the audience why they needed them, they showed what would happen if they did not exist, which they referred to as the "Do Nothing Scenario". As Tonga's NSPA and its staff (PUMA) still struggle to legitimise themselves within and across key ministries, it could be beneficial to adopt Samoa PUMA's approach. Samoa's approach to education

highlighted the importance of education when proposing such a substantive restructuring. Samoa's initial education campaign also suggests that painting a picture of despair in the absence of a regulating authority would tend to have a stronger impact and does more to confirm the importance of planning than simply highlighting the benefits.

Culture and Planning in Tonga

Culture and planning will always be interlinked, whether it is through the mindset that people approach situations with or the regulatory systems that they design. The presence of culture in the field of both Pacific and Tongan planning was a key theme throughout this research, whether explicitly stated or inherent in the views of key informants. The taxing issue of land tenure which concerns planning practitioners across the Pacific is deeply cultural and has different implications for different Pacific Island countries. For planning in Tonga, the issue of land tenure restricts PUMA and the relevant authorities from enacting long coveted plans for public amenities, housing and other public projects (Key Informant 2). The issue is far from simple, as discussed by Halatuituia (2002), such issues are deeply rooted in the Tongan culture of old and are not easily dismantled or overruled by simply enacting legislation. Just as the Solomon Islands had issues with the recognition of their land laws, Tonga continues to struggle with balancing culture and aspirations for development.

Though the Land Act has indeed accounted for the deep cultural connection that Tongan people have with their land when it prohibited the sale of Tongan land to foreigners, it failed to account for the urban growth that has amassed in recent decades. As K1, K2, K5, and K11 explained, all inhabitable land has been allocated and this has severely restricted the ability of planning practitioners to have any say on how certain land parcels can be utilised to cater for urban growth. Not only has it left nowhere to build but up, Tongan cultural propensities again transpire when key enforcement agents need to cross over into private property when installing or repairing necessary public infrastructure such as electricity or drainage networks, especially when part of the structure needs to be installed on a section of private land. Even with the legal permits, key enforcement agents still tend to encounter fierce opposition from the land owners. As a culture, Tongans are extremely protective of their land in the sense that they are hesitant and at times even

uncompromising when faced with the prospects of having their land tampered with in any way, even if it was to benefit the entire community (Key Informant 2). These strong feelings as explained by Key Informant 2, Bryant-Tokelau (1997), Jones (2016) and Halatuituia (2002), go beyond simply ruining the aesthetics of their home. For Tongans, land is symbolic and central to one's identity as a Tongan. In addition to this, the importance of family in Tongan culture is fundamental as many families wish to pass their land on to their sons and envision that the land will be held by their family in perpetuity. With a strong sense of belonging attached to owning land in one's village, even if land were available for compensation, it is highly unlikely that someone would be willing to forfeit their land and move to another village. With no physical space to actuate plans and a fierce resistance from private land owners even when enforcement agents are armed with the legal right, the land tenure issue will continue to be a hindrance to planning. Thus, it is important that key enforcement agents ensure that any future urban and national population growth will be accounted for without disturbing cultural values. This was also highlighted in the literature review where Jones (2016) and Connell (2017) stated that Pacific countries need to remember that such systems were not built with Pacific values in mind. The future of planning and urban management will require Tonga to step back and devise an approach that perhaps goes against the planning standard norm just as Fiji did in order to recognise its informal settlers.

With the recent introduction of the National Spatial Planning and Management (NSPM) Act 2012, many people within Government and from the general public fear that it seeks to over-rule the Land Act and to cease power from the king in relation to land disputes. Just as the Constitution and the Land Act declares, all land belongs to the King. Traditionally, Tonga has always lived within a hierarchy, there was always a clear line of respect and reverence from the commoners to the chiefs. Even with the recent attempts at democratisation, there is still a deep respect for hierarchy and authority, the epitome of which is the Tongan Royal Family. Thus, when systems which seem to disregard that authority are introduced, it is always met with suspicion and fierce opposition. As Key Informant One expressed, much of what constrains the further development of planning is the cultural mindset of the people.

This cultural mindset can also be linked back to the theme of politics in which according to Jones (2016), Pacific politicians deliberately avoid any agenda which appears to be related to land because of the cultural sensitivity associated with it. This spells hardship for planning practitioners in Tonga and across the Pacific and reinforces the need to educate the people and the political authorities. For instance, though there are fears that the NSPM diminishes the authority that the King has over land, upon considering both the Land Act and the NSPM Act, it would suggest that the NSPM Act operates well within the power boundaries set by the Land Act which already transferred power from the King to the Minister of Lands. However, K1, K2 and K5 imply that even though this is true, Tongan people become unbending when it appears that their cultural values might be affected.

Holistic Planning

Bringing this chapter to a close, this section discusses the theme of a holistic planning approach, which was highlighted in the key informant interviews, planning documents and literature. In a sense, this section also incorporates the first two themes of politics and culture. In contextualising this section, Figure 10 from Results 1 is reintroduced below.



Figure 10: Model for Planning in Tonga (Drawing of fale sourced from: (Ministry of Education, 2009))

As explained in Results 1, Figure 10 proposes the ideal approach for planning in Tonga. On the surface, the current planning system appears to be equally grounded on all four sections of the foundation, however, on the whole, there remains the scope to improve and build upon. The development of planning in Tonga has been a case of slow but steady improvement. Though it was not planning as it is known today, before 2006, Tonga fulfilled the economic requirements of planning, albeit, excessively, as development was driven by the economic benefits it would bring to the country. Soon after the Riots, the realisation that planning would be beneficial in coordinating the reconstruction efforts, made it a permanent fix in the government.

In recent years, the focus has shifted to the protection of the natural environment over economic gains. There is a push for the preservation of the natural world made evident in the creation of several climate change related agendas and the new Marine Spatial Plan (MSP). The built environment is provided for in the building codes housed at the Ministry of Infrastructure and a collective of parties including PUMA and the EIA Division provide oversight for development in the built space.

However, what is apparent in the planning documents assessed in Results 2 is that Tonga does not recognise that culture is also reflected in the built space. When the importance of culture is acknowledged in national planning documents, it refers solely to the intangible and emotional traditions. It is only the SEUN Plan housed at the NSPA by PUMA which highlights the importance of preserving culture in heritage sites or buildings, and showcasing culture when introducing new structures to the built environment. However, as stated by key informants, the SEUN Plan seems to be mostly inactive, without any real weight in planning and decision-making processes with respect to development. As expressed by K5, much of Tonga's culture is lost in the absence of an authority to ensure that heritage in the built environment is recognised and provided for. It needs to be recognised that planning is just as much about preserving as it is about projecting into the future.

The fourth section of the foundation represents the importance of accounting for social implications in planning. While this is not to say that the current planning practice is inhumane and completely disregards people, social impacts are broad and wide-ranging,

a fact which Tonga and the rest of the Pacific does not seem to grasp (Jones, 2016). As discussed by several authors, urban centres throughout the Pacific are fraught with infectious diseases and are high contenders for the highest rates of lifestyle conditions such as obesity and diabetes. Whilst these are health issues, Pacific governments fail to realise that the structure and layout of urban centres are directly linked to the health of its residents. Human health has always been a staple matter of national significance in Tonga's national development documents since they were established in 1966 till the most recent framework TSDFII from 2015 to 2025. However, it is clear that urban management is not thought to play a part in the health of its residents. This is not uncommon and is mirrored by its neighbours across the Pacific Region. Motor vehicles have taken over as the preferred mode of transport in Pacific urban centres and fast food restaurants are commonplace and frequented every day. In fact, many key informants voiced concerns about the rapid increase of motor vehicle use in Tonga. As previously discussed, the result of urban living in the Marshall Islands was 37% of two to four-year olds diagnosed as obese and 50% of adults over the age of 35 with diabetes. Recently, some Pacific Island Countries have become aware of this link and are attempting to make improvements. One of those countries is the Solomon Islands who have acknowledged and voiced concern that the layout of their urban centre caters to motor vehicles more than it does for pedestrians.

It can take years to rethink and reconstruct a city, thus, the need to realise and cater for this is immediate. Tonga needs to cease formulating projects which seek to cater for issues like the extensive use of motor vehicles and instead reassess the structure of the urban centre so that it discourages such issues instead. In the interest of resources, or more precisely, the lack thereof, such a restructuring does not need to be physically strenuous. Efforts can start off small with the simple pedestrianizing of the main streets in the CBD. This effectively forces people to walk and discourages the overuse of motor vehicles, while at the same time promoting a healthier lifestyle. While such a change is not physically challenging, appealing to the mindset of the people is what will be most difficult. Such a change will require the efforts of a robust planning process driven by an assertive team of planning practitioners and supported by the wider Government and higher-level decision-makers in order to then persuade the general public. Unfortunately, the fragmented state of Tonga's planning system does not give the impression that such

a task can be achieved at present. This will require the centralisation of planning efforts and uniting them under the one banner of the planning agency. However, the process to reach this outcome is complex in itself due to the political situation within the relevant ministries and the wider government.

Researchers and practitioners alike constantly push the notion of holistic planning, planning which considers all fundamental aspects of society. For Tonga, these aspects can be categorised under the four sections portrayed in Figure 10. However, the aspects are broad and encompass a myriad of additional issues which are often seen as separate from planning and the wider goal of urban management. This issue has been around for centuries since the beginnings of modern planning. As Home (1992) explained, since the colonial era, planning had never succeeded in really controlling the negative impacts of urban growth as governments in power failed to understand just how multifaceted the issue of urbanisation was and all its correlating parts.

Conclusion

This chapter has offered an interpretation of this study's findings and assessed its implications for Tonga in the interim and in the long run. As inferred by key informants and portrayed in Tonga's planning documents, over the last few decades, the development of planning in Tonga has been characterised by political and cultural struggles. Though planning in Tonga has evolved to represent a more holistic form than it did before the event of the Riots, there is still much to consider. There is also the matter of planning still being in its infancy and the country itself still experiencing what can be described as a transition period both in terms of development and governance. However, as K9 stated "*...the process is still very early days but it's not an excuse not to get moving on things. There is always an opportunity to do things better.*".

In terms of the three research questions, it establishes that planning in Tonga before the Riots was predominantly of an economic nature and lacked any robust urban management considerations. The second research question then sought to understand the changes to the planning process which occurred as a result of the Riots. In this sense, it is clear that the Riots was as K11 put it, "*the key event*" in establishing planning in Tonga.

After the Riots, planning continued to gain recognition and the NSPA and PUMA were established to regulate planning processes. Since then, planning's reach has expanded beyond economic considerations and is currently heavily concentrated on the management of the natural world. In addressing the final research question regarding whether key enforcement agents see the current planning frameworks to be sufficient for Tonga's future development and current urban growth issues, the impression is that of uncertainty. While several plans and frameworks have been developed, they predominantly remain inactive. The multitude of reasons to why that is sit under the umbrella of political influences and cultural restraints. Tonga still has a long way to go to establish a truly holistic approach to planning, particularly in the areas of cultural recognition in the built environment and a deeper understanding of what constitutes social impacts. In order to implement these changes, PUMA will need to be given "*teeth to bite with*" (Key Informant Five).

Conclusion and Recommendations

Planning is a complex field, planning in the Pacific is even more complex. The diverse range of challenges, both general, uniquely Pacific and those uniquely Tongan have made it difficult for Tongan planning practitioners to form a robust planning system capable of tackling the growing issue of urbanisation. This research attempted to make sense of the development of planning in Tonga and the role that the 2006 Riots played in its establishment. In doing so, it offers a timeline of the planning development in Tonga in terms of events, policies and projects, as presented in government documents and through the reflections of previous and current key enforcement agents. It also highlights the challenges Tongan planning practitioners face in implementing planning processes, the key issues which Tonga might encounter as a result of future urban growth and it then suggests ways that those challenges can be overcome. It is paramount to understand the root causes of the issues in order to devise solutions to alleviate or control for them.

Key Findings

Guided by the three research questions, this study affirmed that the 2006 Riots was the fundamental event which aided the establishment of planning in Tonga and led to the development of the National Spatial Planning Authority Office (NSPAO) with the Planning and Urban Management Agency (PUMA) as its executing body. Before the Riots, the primary function of planning in Tonga was of an economic nature where plans were developed according to economic indicators and budgeting allocations. According to key informants, there was also a small division, described by K2 as a “*one-man band*” within the Ministry of Lands and Natural Resources which was referred to as the planning division. However, this division’s principal directive was to manage the registry of land and was far from the holistic form that planning should represent. Planning related responsibilities such as the management of the natural environment and the built

environment were shared across the Department of Environment and what was then the Ministry of Works.

When the NSPAO and PUMA were being deliberated, the intention was for the NSPAO to be an independent government body with functions and powers similar to that of a city council. Unfortunately, the decision was made to keep PUMA under a government ministry with the Minister of Lands as the overarching planning authority. Core planning responsibilities also remained shared across several government ministries. This is also still the case at present. According to key informants and in considering the legislative planning framework and the numerous existing plans, the tools are sufficient to provide effective regulation of Tonga's current urban pressures. As key informants explained, the necessary tools are ready and available, however, the issue is the absence of implementation.

Implementation is impeded by four principal issues as identified by key informants. These include the dispersed planning responsibilities, political influences, lack of both financial and human resources and Tonga's land tenure system. Though Tonga is not experiencing a surge of population and urban growth such as those experienced in several Melanesian countries, one can never be sure what the future holds. Across the Pacific, countries are experiencing damaging impacts of urbanisation such as the rise of informal settlements as a consequence of land availability, widespread poverty, increased pressure on public infrastructure, rising crime rates and negative impacts on health to name a few. With these potential troubles and reflections from key informants in mind, the following recommendations are offered to help Tonga and PUMA navigate the shifting tides of governance, as well the four key issues that were identified.

Recommendations

- An Education Campaign for PUMA

Though PUMA is led to assume that their colleagues within the ministry are aware of their function, the findings of this study reveal that this is not the case. Many key informants outside of PUMA do not fully understand PUMA's role in the Ministry and the wider

agenda of national development. As explained in the previous chapter, in order to truly establish themselves, it is necessary that PUMA has the respect and support of the relevant ministries and the wider government. The first step to achieving this is ensuring that everyone is aware of what their mandate is and understands the value they bring to the Ministry and the country as a whole.

- Centralisation of planning responsibilities under one planning authority

As much as one would hope to believe that stakeholders can unite under amicable circumstances to achieve a common goal, the reality as explained by key informants and the history of planning in the Pacific, is that this seldom works. To reiterate the words of Peter Oneill, Papua New Guinea's Prime Minister from 2011 to 2019:

"Government processes are slow when they demand transparency and fairness."

As key informants explained, a resistance to share information exists within and across the key ministries. The only way to solve this is to formally centralise planning responsibilities and finally eliminate the elongated confusion caused by the fragmented system.

- Adopt a holistic approach to planning

Once planning services are consolidated, planning practitioners will need to reassess the national approach to planning to ensure that all aspects of society are considered. It is worth noting that this task is made eminently possible once centralisation is allowed to occur. In following the model proposed in the previous chapter, Tongan planning practitioners can accomplish after centuries of global failure, a truly holistic planning system capable of managing urban growth in a sustainable manner.

Future Research

The findings of this study provide a foundation for further research into the dynamics of planning in Tonga, its presence in the wider Pacific narrative and its future in the ever-

changing political scene. As this study was mostly concentrated on the Nuku'alofa Urban Area, it did not take into consideration the planning realities of the outer islands which undoubtedly offer a myriad of interesting lessons. The topic area is one of complexity and would benefit from the opportunity of more time and a wider scope to really delve into and appreciate the depth of the issues that were identified. As this research ponders the possibility of extreme urbanisation such as that which currently plagues Melanesia, it would also be interesting to revisit this issue in future to assess whether it occurred and what the role of planning was in managing those it impacts. The planning discipline is still in its early stages in Tonga and will continue to grow. Whether it reaches a point in time where planning services are centralised and assumes the function of an independent agency will be interesting to follow and to report on in any future research. Till then, the vision for planning in Tonga shared by Key Informant Two marks the end of this study.

"I wish we see the potential urban planning could play here in Nuku'alofa and Tonga as a whole, because for sure urban planning is not in the priorities of the Government, but I would like to see it well established, on its feet, having resources to do things and to make things work... that's my vision. Here in Tonga, you see all of these things that are happening and you just wish things were different...that the plans we put in place were recognised and allowed to work." K2

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Tongan Legislation and Bills

The Land Act 1903, 1927 and 2016 Revised Edition

Environmental Impact Assessment Act 2003

Environmental Management Act 2010

National Spatial Planning Management (NSPM) Act 2012

National Spatial Planning and Management Amendment Bill 2019

Tongan Regulations

Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Regulations 2010

Tongan Government Documents

Constitution of Tonga, 1875 and 2016 Revised Edition

Strategic Development Plan Eight 2006/07 – 2008/09

Tonga Strategic Development Framework (TSDF) 2011 – 2014

Nuku'alofa 20-Year Structure Plan 2012

Nuku'alofa Urban Development Sector Project Consolidated Annual Report Year 3 – 2015

Tonga 2016 Census of Housing and Population (Tonga Statistics Department, 2017)
Department of Environment 2017 Annual Report

Tonga Strategic Development Framework 2015 – 2025

Nuku'alofa Flood Management Master Plan 2019

Appendices

APPENDIX A: CONSENT FORM

[19/061]

[16/05/19]



Policy in Practice: The Development of Planning processes in Tonga following the 2006 riots

CONSENT FORM FOR PARTICIPANTS

I have read the Information Sheet concerning this project and understand what it is about. All my questions have been answered to my satisfaction. I understand that I am free to request further information at any stage.

I know that:-

1. My participation in the project is entirely voluntary;
2. I am free to withdraw from the project before its completion without any disadvantage;
3. Personal identifying information [*audio recordings*] may be destroyed at the conclusion of the project but any raw data on which the results of the project depend will be retained in secure storage for at least five years;
4. This project involves an open-questioning technique. The general line of questioning includes natural and built resource management in Tonga and the CBD rebuild following the 2006 riots. The precise nature of the questions which will be asked have not been determined in advance, but will depend on the way in which the interview develops and that in the event that the line of questioning develops in such a way that I feel hesitant or uncomfortable I may decline to answer any particular question(s) and/or may withdraw from the project without any disadvantage of any kind.
7. The results of the project may be published and will be available in the University of Otago Library (Dunedin, New Zealand) but every attempt will be made to preserve my anonymity, should I choose to remain anonymous.

8. I, as the participant: a) agree to being named in the research, ☐ OR;
☐

b) would rather remain anonymous

I agree to take part in this project.

.....

(Signature of participant)

.....

(Date)

.....

(Printed Name)

.....

Name of person taking consent

This study has been approved by the University of Otago Human Ethics Committee. If you have any concerns about the ethical conduct of the research you may contact the Committee through the Human Ethics Committee Administrator (ph +643 479 8256 or email gary.witte@otago.ac.nz). Any issues you raise will be treated in confidence and investigated and you will be informed of the outcome.

APPENDIX B: INFORMATION SHEET

[Reference Number: 19/061]

[16/05/19]



Policy in Practice: The Development of Planning Processes in Tonga following the 2006 riots

INFORMATION SHEET FOR INTERVIEW PARTICIPANTS

Thank you for showing an interest in this project. Please read this information sheet carefully before deciding whether or not to participate. If you decide to participate we thank you. If you decide not to take part there will be no disadvantage to you and we thank you for considering our request.

What is the Aim of the Project?

This project is being undertaken as part of the requirements for a Master of Planning at the University of Otago. The main aim of this project is to assess the planning reform which took place as a result of the 2006 riots.

What Type of Participants are being sought?

50 participants including government officials in planning related agencies involved in decision making, local business owners within the CBD and residents who have lived with the impacts of the 2006 riots.

What will Participants be Asked to Do?

Should you agree to take part in this project, you will be asked questions about natural and physical resource management in Tonga including the CBD rebuild after the 2006 riots. The interview is expected to take approximately 30 – 60 minutes.

Please be aware that you may decide not to take part in the project without any disadvantage to yourself of any kind.

What Data or Information will be Collected and What Use will be Made of it?

Information about planning development in Tonga will be collected. If you agree, the interviews will be audio recorded to assist the researcher in interpreting the provided information. The results of the project may be published but every attempt will be made to preserve your anonymity should you choose to remain anonymous.

If you are interested, you can also receive a copy of the completed thesis.

Can Participants Change their Mind and Withdraw from the Project?

You may withdraw from participation in the project at any time and there will be no disadvantage to yourself of any kind.

What if Participants have any Questions?

If you have any questions about our project, either now or in the future, please feel free to contact either:-

Yvonne Takau

and

Michelle Thompson-Fawcett

School of Geography

School of Geography

E: takyv357@student.otago.ac.nz

P: 0064-3-479-8762

E: michelle.thompson-fawcett@otago.ac.nz

This study has been approved by the University of Otago Human Ethics Committee. If you have any concerns about the ethical conduct of the research you may contact the Committee through the Human Ethics Committee Administrator (ph +643 479 8256 or email gary.witte@otago.ac.nz). Any issues you raise will be treated in confidence and investigated and you will be informed of the outcome.

APPENDIX C: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Could you please tell me about your role here in the Ministry and what that entails?
2. Could you elaborate on the planning processes that existed prior to the 2006 riots and the role of the planner / the role of PUMA before the riots?
3. What were the planning changes that took place after the riots?
4. With the new planning tools/frameworks that were developed after the riots/ in response to the riots; to what extent do you think they have achieved their purpose?
5. To what extent would you actually attribute these changes to the lasting impacts of the riots on the CBD? & What are the other factors that played a part in the development of planning processes in Tonga?
6. To what extent do you think the current planning tools/frameworks are sufficient to tackle Tongatapu's current and projected urban infrastructure pressures?
7. What do you see PUMA's role as being going forward? (in terms of urban/spatial planning developments in Tonga)
8. What do you see as the greatest challenge to the development of urban planning process here in Tonga?
9. In terms of planning and the sustainable management of resources; do you think that a regulatory approach (rules, plans etc..) or a non-regulatory approach (educating the public, community plans) is more appropriate for Tonga?
10. What are your thoughts on government's ability to maintain the infrastructure/finished products after major development projects? (sustainability factor)